Unionization as a Community-based Intervention against the Precarious Employment of Filipino Immigrant Women in the Garment Industry: A case study of the Canada Goose Workers' Union in Winnipeg, MB

By

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Abstract

The rise of neoliberalism in Canada in the 1980s has intensified a specific formation of precarious employment which disproportionately affects female, racialized workers, including Filipino immigrant women. Historically, this has been true for the garment industry of Winnipeg, which has long employed female migrant workers from various ethnocultural communities, including Filipino migrant women workers. Previous literature on precarious employment points to the positive effects of unions in improving the precarious conditions disproportionally faced by racialized and gendered workers, but is complicated by barriers to unionization faced by these workers and recent declines in unionization rates in Canada. However, in 2021, garment industry workers in Winnipeg's Canada Goose plants successfully organized and formed the Canada Goose Workers' Union under Workers United Canada Council.

Using a qualitative, community-based approach in collaboration with Canada Goose Workers' Union, this research aims to study unionization as a community-based intervention against the precarious employment of racialized immigrant women workers in the garment industry through a case study of the recently formed Canada Goose Workers' Union in Winnipeg. Rooted in a feminist political economy (FPE) approach, the objective is to document the union certification process, and to understand whether unionization and collective bargaining have affected the degree of precarity that Filipino immigrant women workers tend to disproportionately experience within a neoliberal context. This study found that social locations such as gender, race, and citizenship were fundamental to shaping the precarious conditions experienced by the workers at Canada Goose, which compelled them to begin a union drive in 2019. The results of this research point to the role that unions play in determining the conditions of work and life of Filipino immigrant women. Unions therefore must employ an intersectional

approach to organizing and representing immigrant women workers, whose identities play a fundamental role in shaping their economic conditions in Canada.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, this work would not have been possible without the earnest collaboration of Workers United Canada Council (WUCC) and the Canada Goose Workers' Union (CGWU). Specifically, I would like to thank Abstinencia 'Abs' Diza for her guidance and feedback throughout the research process, and Alelie Sanvictores for her work during the recruitment process. Most importantly, my utmost gratitude goes to the workers and shop stewards at Winnipeg's Canada Goose facilities for sacrificing their time and their efforts to be involved in this project and for entrusting me with their stories. I am truly honoured and beyond grateful.

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Isang taos-pusong pasasalamat sa inyong lahat.

For Filipino women in Canada and beyond

who have traversed borders for a better tomorrow.

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Introduction

In Winnipeg, when the weather drops below 0°C, people begin to don their winter gear. One brand in particular stands out from the rest: characterized by a red, white, and blue patch often sewn onto the upper left arm, Canada Goose has made a name for itself as a luxury performance outerwear and clothing brand, where one "goose- and duck-down filled parka… [can retail] to up to $2,145" (Lau 2025). Despite many other garment manufacturers moving their production off-shore, Canada Goose still manufactures in Canada within its facilities in Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg (Canada Goose Inc. n.d.). This allows Canada Goose to label its down-filled products with a "Made in Canada" claim, which requires that "at least 51% of the total direct costs of producing or manufacturing the good have been incurred in Canada" and that "the last substantial transformation of the good occurred in Canada" (Competition Bureau Canada 2025).

The efforts of Canada Goose to keep its manufacturing operations in Canada are driven by its desire to maintain its Canadian heritage, as it began operations in Toronto in 1957 as Metro Sportswear. In the 1970s, the company was rebranded by then-CEO David Reiss as Snow Goose, and expanded production to custom parkas made for extreme weather (Lau 2025). Today, Canada Goose attributes its success to its Canadian heritage, with current CEO Dani Reiss stating, "[our] Canadian heritage and commitment to manufacturing our parkas domestically are at the heart of our business and brand" (Reiss 2019). In 2019, Canada Goose made a total revenue of $830 million and, after deducting expenses, a net income of $144 million (see Fig. 1). From 2019 to 2024, the gross profit of Canada Goose, which measures their total revenue after deducting the costs of goods sold, increased from $516.8 million to $917.4 million (Canada Goose Inc. 2021; 2024). Canada Goose also distinguishes itself from other garment manufacturers through socially

conscious campaigns involving “polar bear conservation and amassing the world’s largest retail collection of Inuit art” (Lau 2025). As a part of these promises, the company publishes annual sustainability reports which summarizes the company’s strategy, initiatives, and operations for each year. A portion of these reports involves a section on people and communities, where, in 2019, Canada Goose claims that “[their] employees have been a critical part in the success [they] have achieved to date” (Canada Goose Inc. 2019, p. 43).

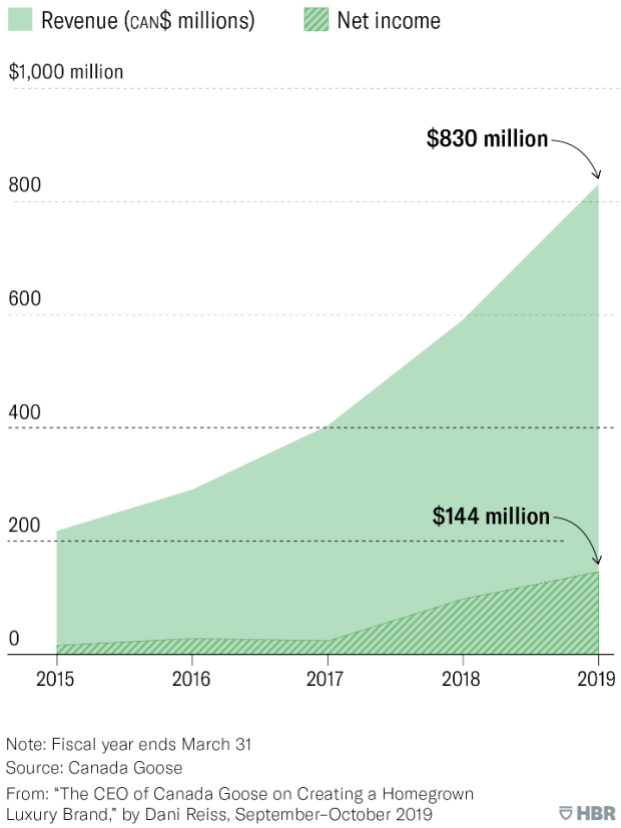

Figure 1: Revenue and Net Income of Canada Goose Holdings Inc., 2015-2019 (in CAN$ millions) (Reiss 2019)

Despite this sentiment, 2019 was also the same year that a union certification drive began in Canada Goose’s Winnipeg facilities under Workers United Canada Council (WUCC), which lasted until 2021. During the union drive, reports were made about union-busting activities and unsafe working conditions in their facilities, “including safety concerns, broken bathrooms, lack

of sanitizer and limited access to personal protective equipment" (Roshitsh 2021). Workers reported experiencing aggressive and disrespectful behaviour from management (Boguslaw 2021), as well as being "driven to work at high speeds by piecework pay" (Cabana 2021). Similar to other garment manufacturers in Canada, many of the workers in Canada Goose are racialized immigrant women who are likely to experience precarious working conditions (B. Anderson 2010; Liu 2019). Despite the challenges faced during the union drive, the 1,200 workers at three of the Canada Goose facilities in Winnipeg successfully unionized in December 2021, with 86% of the workers voting in favour (Workers United Canada Council 2021).

Contextualized by the growing phenomenon of economic migration and precarious work in the neoliberal era in Canada (Vosko 2010b), this thesis employs a community-based research (CBR) approach in partnership with Workers United Canada Council (WUCC) to document the union certification drive initiated by the workers at Canada Goose in Winnipeg, and to identify the difference that the union has made in terms of the precarious employment experienced by its Filipino members. Using a feminist political economy (FPE) lens, the overarching goal of this project is to explore unionization tactics and strategies that are effective in organizing and representing racialized and gendered immigrant workers who are likely to experience precarious work within non-unionized workplaces, particularly within the private sector (Anderson et al. 2006, p. 301).

Rooted in a historical materialist approach, I first contextualize the project within histories of Filipino labour migration and connect these to the current conditions experienced by Filipino workers, particularly those who are women, within Canada. This study pays particular attention to the Canadian context, including migration and labour history in Winnipeg and beyond, as well as the growing phenomenon of precarious work documented within the

neoliberal era. In situating this work within these histories, I illustrate that precarious migrant labour has been at the heart of both Philippine and Canadian labour history, shaping the conditions of Filipino immigrants in Winnipeg and in other broader contexts. I then present the significance of the study within the Philippine and Canadian political economies, both of which depend upon precarious migrant labour. Providing the historical foundations of this project allows for a clear understanding of the historical and structural forces shaping the current living and working conditions of Filipino immigrants in Winnipeg.

Historical Context

Histories of Labour Migration in the Philippines

To understand the character of labour migration originating in the Philippines, it is necessary to explore how labour migration became embedded in the political economy of the Philippines. Marked by nearly 400 years of colonial-imperialism, Philippine history is punctuated by three colonial-imperial periods in the country: by Spain from 1521-1896; by the United States from 1898-1946; and simultaneously, by Japan during the Second World War (Nadeau 2020). Among these three periods, the Spanish and US colonial periods were most influential in shaping the Philippine economy as it stands today. The Spanish colonial period, which was extractive in nature, shifted the Philippine economy towards export-oriented production with an emphasis on agriculture, on the basis of a theocratically-structured *encomienda* system similar to feudalism (Boyce 1993, p. 5; Guerrero 1968; Nadeau 2020, pp. 49–50). Although the colonial dynamics between Spain and the Philippines established the outward orientation of the Philippine economy, much of the foundations of the labour export regime in the country originates from its history within the U.S. empire. Rodriguez (2010) situates the current labour export regime as a direct consequence of U.S. imperialism in the

Philippines through the creation of institutions and structures that serve as a precursor to the current system. As a result of the Spanish-American war in 1898, the Philippines was sold off as a colony of Spain along with Puerto Rico and Cuba to the United States through the 1898 Treaty of Paris (Nadeau 2020, p. 63; Rodriguez 2010, p. 2). Despite efforts from revolutionary, anti-colonial Philippine movements to resist US imperialism during the Philippine-American war, the U.S. successfully implemented violent pacification campaigns that deteriorated the conditions in the Philippines, serving as a rationale for labour emigration to the US (Rodriguez 2010, p. 3). Beyond building the foundations of Philippine government to mirror American political institutions in the guise of 'benevolent assimilation', U.S. imperialism had also used the country as a source of cheap labour due to the consideration of Filipinos as U.S. citizens, therefore helping facilitate the migration of Filipino workers to the US to meet labour demand within sectors such as agriculture and service (Rodriguez 2010, p. 4). Notably, one of the sectors wherein labour migration was prevalent during U.S. imperialism in the Philippines was the healthcare sector, in particular nursing, which has since remained as an important part of the current Philippine labour export regime (Ball 2004, p. 119). Citing Choy (2003), Rodriguez (2010) states that "prospective nurses, generally selected from the most elite families, were sent by the colonial government to the United States for training… in the first decade of the twentieth century" (p. 6). Although Filipino nurses returned to the Philippines after being educated in the US, this dynamic continued the relation of labour migration between the US and the Philippines. Therefore, U.S. imperialism was instrumental in continuing the export-oriented nature of the Philippine economy through establishing the beginnings of labour export in the country.

The role of the Philippine state in encouraging labour emigration, especially within the healthcare sector, continued even after the Philippines formally attained independence from the

U.S. in 1946. Remaining as a neocolony of the US, the Philippines was one of the earliest countries in the Global South that implemented neoliberal policies such as economic liberalization prior to the rise of neoliberalism in the 1980s. This was facilitated through treaties established by the US in the Philippines which "[gave] American capitalists the same economic rights as Filipinos (i.e. parity)" (IBON Foundation 2022, p. 5). Moreover, the U.S. Exchange Visitor Program (EVP), which was founded to "[serve] U.S. Cold War ideological aims", assisted in the continuation of nurse migration from the Philippines to the U.S. However, what truly solidified the emergence of the labour brokerage state in the Philippines was the difficulties surrounding foreign exchange and borrowing during the Marcos regime, which lasted from 1965 to 1986. Driven by a development strategy 'from above' which served the interests of Marcos and his cronies, the Philippines during the Marcos regime was characterized by an export-oriented economy which depended on imports, foreign direct investment, and external debt. As such, these conditions during the Marcos regime made the Philippines extremely susceptible to the effects of global economic crises, including the 1973 oil shock, where the Philippines suffered a balance-of-payments crisis. To deal with this balance-of-payments crisis, the Marcos regime implemented Presidential Decree (P.D.) 442 (also known as the 1974 Labor Code) in 1974, which aimed to prop up the country's foreign exchange reserves through remittances (Alipio 2019, 141–42; IBON Foundation 2022, 13; Rodriguez 2010, 12; Solomon 2009, 285). Specifically, P.D. 442 established state functions and agencies including "the Overseas Employment Development Board (OEDB), the Bureau of Employment Services (BES), and the National Seaman's Board (NSB)… [which] were responsible for the development, promotion, regulation, and implementation of the labor export program" (Rodriguez 2010, p. 12; Supreme Court of the Philippines 1974).

However, remittances were not enough to resolve the balance-of-payments crisis in the Philippines, leading to the implementation of structural adjustment loans in the 1980s. During the Marcos regime, the national debt of the Philippines ballooned from US$599 million in 1965 US$26.4 billion by 1985 in order to fuel what Boyce (1993), citing Little (1976), refers to as 'immiserizing growth' (Boyce 1993, p. 10; IBON Foundation 2022, p. 12). A portion of this external debt originated from two structural adjustment loans borrowed from the World Bank in the 1980s, which were implemented alongside "13 Stand-By Arrangements, an Extended Fund Facility (EFF), and a Compensatory Financing Facility (CFF) with the [International Monetary Fund] IMF" (IBON Foundation 2022, p. 6). Out of all of the other countries in the region, the Philippines held "the most loans, programs and projects from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in Southeast Asia", amounting to a total value of US$4.3 billion (IBON Foundation 2022, p. 6) (see Fig. 2). These loans aimed to change the industrial character of the Philippine economy by shifting from exporting primary inputs (e.g., coconut, sugar) to manufactured goods (e.g., garments electronic components) as the exports of primary products slowed in the later part of the 1970s (Rodriguez 2010, 13; World Bank 1985, iv). Provisioned by the World Bank, structural adjustment loans further entrenched neoliberalism in the Philippines through policies which aimed to increase the production of manufactured exports through import liberalization and private investment as the growth in exports in primary products slowed (World Bank 1985, p. iv). Analyzing debt crises in Africa, Maci (2025) understands these borrowing dynamics between countries in the Global South and international financial institutions (IFIs) as a "stark manifestation of neo-colonialism". San Juan (2003) draws connections between these dynamics and the process of 'benevolent assimilation' during U.S. imperialism, now manifesting in its neocolonial form through foreign debt instruments and its prerequisites.

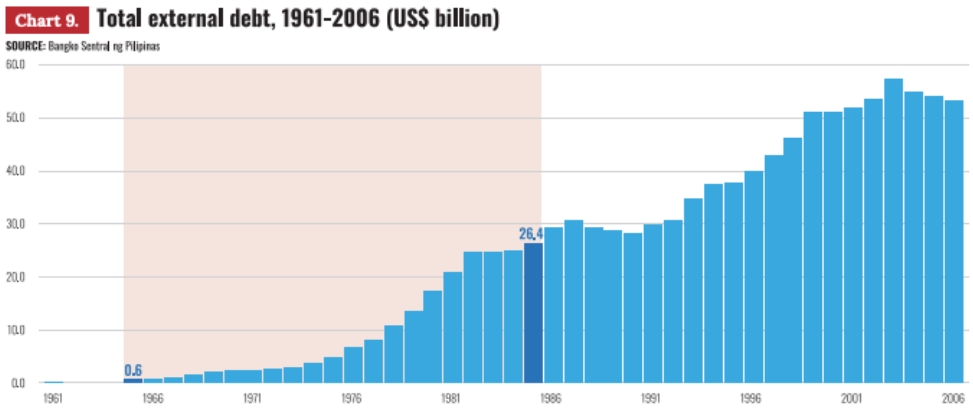

Figure 2: Total external debt in the Philippines, 1961-2006 (US$ billion) (IBON Foundation 2022)

As a result of neoliberal policies in the Philippines, the gross national product (GNP) per capita of the country increased by 3.1% from 1962 to 1974, then by 1.0% between 1974 to 1986 (Boyce 1993, p. 15). However, this growth in GNP per capita did not materialize for the majority of Filipino workers, who experienced economic difficulties during the Marcos regime. Wage rates within the agricultural sector declined by roughly one-third between 1962 to 1986 (see Table 1), leading to a decline in real wages (see Fig. 3) (Boyce 1993, p. 25). Meanwhile, within urban areas, wage rates for both unskilled and skilled workers were also falling (see Table 1), leading to similar declines in real wages within the same period (see Fig. 4) (Boyce 1993, pp. 27-29). Falling real wages contributed to the rise in labour force participation for women, whose labour force participation rates rose from 40 to 48 percent between 1976 and 1986 (Boyce 1993, p. 32). Although unemployment rates seemed to be falling during the earlier part of the regime, this data may be a misleading indicator of well-being due to the prevalence of underemployment in the country, which is difficult to measure (Boyce 1993, p. 30). Reported data, however, shows a significant rise in unemployment rates, increasing from 3.9% in 1975 to 12.6% in 1985 (see

Fig. 5) (IBON Foundation 2022, p. 13). The economic difficulties faced by workers during the Marcos regime further contributed to the outward migration of workers from the Philippines.

Table 1: Wage Rates for Agricultural, Skilled, and Unskilled Workers, 1962-1986 (Boyce 1993)

	Agricultural Workers		Urban Areas			
			Skilled Workers		Unskilled Workers	
	1986 pesos	Index (1962=100)	1986 pesos	Index (1962=100)	1986 pesos	Index (1962=100)
1962	41.31	100.0	126.74	100.0	89.50	100.0
1986	29.20	70.7	35.28	27.8	23.04	25.7

Figure 3: Daily wage rate in agriculture, 1962-1986 (Php, constant 1986 pesos) (IBON Foundation 2022)

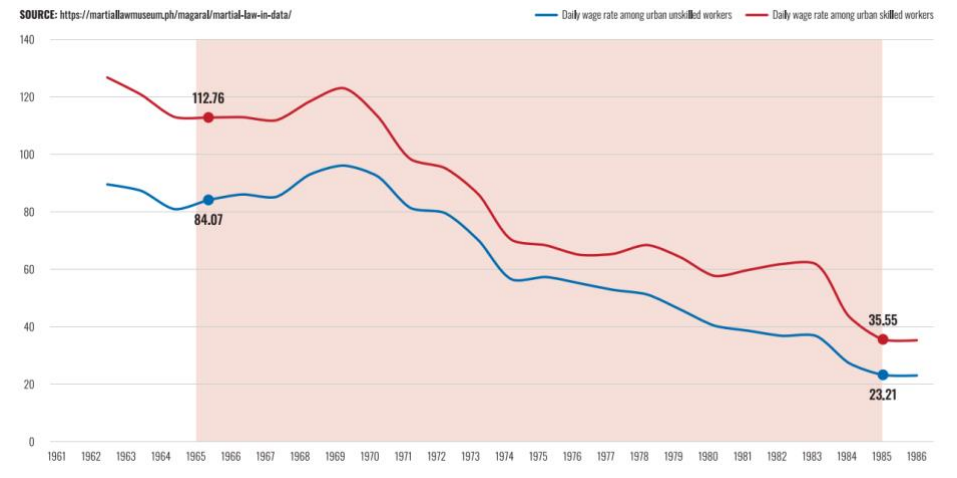

Figure 4: Daily wage rates among urban workers, unskilled and skilled, 1962-1986 (Php, constant 1986 pesos) (IBON Foundation 2022)

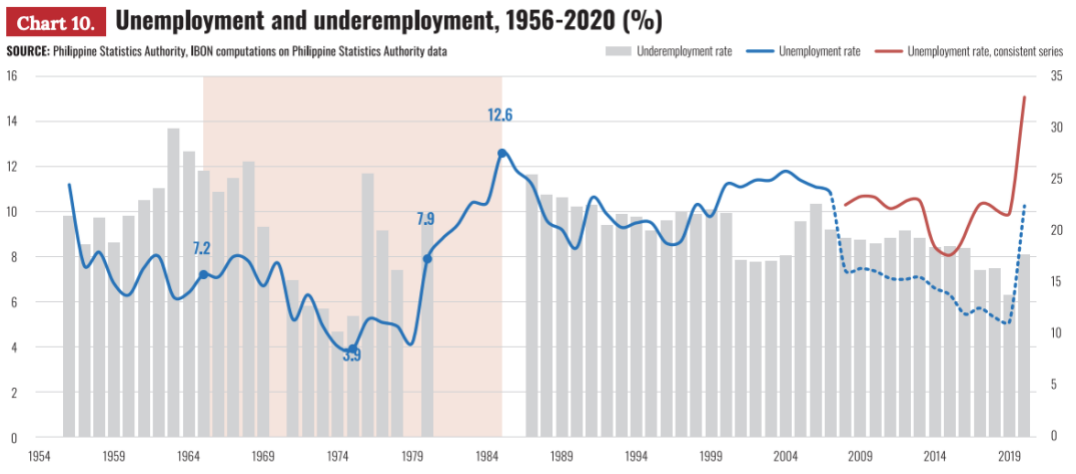

Figure 5: Unemployment and underemployment in the Philippines, 1956-2020 (%) (IBON Foundation 2022)

Because of the continuous economic benefits of migration through employment and remittances, labour export continued to be promoted and further institutionalized by succeeding presidential administrations until present day, forming the current labour export regime in the country (Rodriguez 2010, pp. 12–14; Solomon 2009, p. 286). Today, there are approximately 2.16 million Filipinos working overseas, mostly engaged in elementary occupations (i.e., jobs which "involve the performance of simple and routine tasks") (Philippine Statistics Authority 2024). Moreover, the character of migrant work from the Philippines has become increasingly gendered: in 2023, the majority (55.6%) of the Filipino migrant worker population identified as female, 64.1% of whom worked in elementary occupations (Philippine Statistics Authority 2024). The dominance of women as Filipino migrant workers has been attributed to the demand in labour within sectors that are typically dominated by women, such as service, domestic work and healthcare (Rodriguez 2010, p. 36). Remittances, which are part and parcel of the labour export regime in the Philippines, have grown in the Philippine economy, reaching an all-time high of US$3.73 billion in December 2024 (Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas 2025). Since 1977, the

share of personal remittances in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Philippines increased steadily, to 8.9% in 2023 (World Bank 2023) (see Fig. 6).

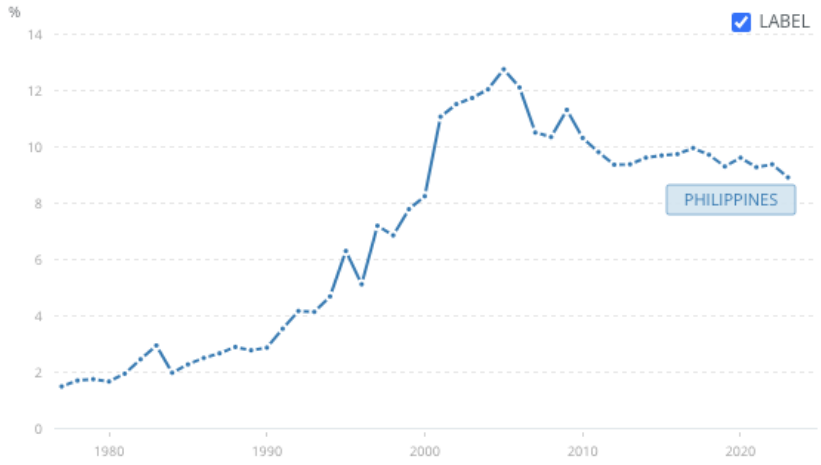

Figure 6: Personal remittances received in the Philippines as % of GDP, 1977-2023 (World Bank 2023)

Immigration Policy and Migrant Work in the Context of Canada

Much of the growth in Filipino migration in Canada in the 20th century until present day can be attributed to changes in Canadian immigration policy, paired with the underdevelopment of the Philippine economy and the embeddedness of labour migration in the colonial-imperial history of the Philippines (McElhinny et al. 2012, p. 9). Moreover, the maintenance of labour export regimes in the Philippines depends upon its relationship with labour-receiving states such as Canada, which has historically depended on migrant labour to grow its economy (Sharma 2019, p. 62; Stasiulis 2020, pp. 24–25; Walia 2010, p. 72). Often described as a "tap" that can be turned on and off, Canadian immigration policy has historically excluded racialized and gendered migrant workers from citizenship while benefitting off of their labour. Through assigning the temporary right to work towards migrant workers, the Canadian state is not obliged to apply the same protections that its citizen workers enjoy, thus constructing a precarious form

of citizenship (Cranford and Vosko 2006, p. 47; Henaway 2023, p. 63; Walia 2010, p. 72). Although racial discrimination has been legally barred within immigration policy since the 1960s, social locations such as race and gender remain important in determining the likelihood of precarious employment and citizenship within Canada as its immigration programs have been increasingly segmented by educational attainment and work experience (Abu-Laban, Tungohan, and Gabriel 2022, 110; Cranford and Vosko 2006, 60). This segmentation based on immigration policy parallels Fraser's (2023) analysis where "exploitable "workers" are accorded the status of rights-bearing individuals and citizens; entitled to state protection… expropriable "others" are… stripped of political protection" (p. 15). Labour-receiving states such as Canada benefit from labour export policies in the Philippines which reproduce a racialized and gendered pool of labour whose labour can be expropriated to form the basis of accumulation. This is currently reflected in Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy which includes recent initiatives from Canada to encourage Canadian employers to recruit workers in the Philippines (Global Affairs Canada 2022; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) 2023). For example, in 2023, a pilot program named CAN Work Philippines was created by IRCC to "streamline work permit processing for eligible Canadian employers… so that skilled workers in the Philippines can come to Canada" (IRCC 2023).

Filipino Labour Migration into Canada

Shaped by the dynamics of the labour market in the Philippines and changes in Canadian immigration policy, the character of Filipino labour migration into Canada has transformed throughout the recent decades, especially during the 1970s. The early influx of Filipino labour migration into Canada was characterized by professional or skilled workers, particularly within the healthcare sector (e.g., doctors, nurses) where there was a labour shortage (McElhinny et al.

2012, p. 9). The late 1970s saw a remarkable shift in the composition and experiences of Filipino migrants coming to Canada in terms of an increase in non-professional workers in manufacturing and service sectors, and in terms of migrant worker schemes such as the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) and the Live-in Caregiver program, which institutionalized precarious employment for many migrant workers through assigning temporary right-to-work without permanent residence (PR) status. Additionally, many Filipinos also arrived through the family reunification program, which allowed immigrants to sponsor their family members to move to Canada (McElhinny et al. 2012, p. 10).

In 2021, Filipinos comprised 2.5% (925,490) of the Canadian population (36,991,980), majority of whom identify as female (510,570) (Embassy of the Philippines 2021). Many of these Filipinos are recent immigrants to Canada (McElhinny et al. 2012, p. 8, citing Kelly 2006). On a by-province basis, Manitoba has the greatest number of Filipinos on a per capita basis, composing 6.78% of Manitoba's population. The Filipino population in Canada is particularly concentrated within urban centres, with "nearly 80 per cent of those identifying as Filipina/o… [living in] four cities: Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Montreal" (McElhinny et al. 2012, p. 9). In a report published on Filipino labour in Canada in 2023, Filipinos exhibited "highest labour force participation rate among all Canadians", with "[almost] four in five (78.6%) Filipino Canadians aged 15 years and older… working or actively looking for a job in 2022" (Statistics Canada 2023). In terms of job types, Filipinos "were most likely to be working in sales and service (182,535 people), health care (98,030), business, finance and administration (79,360) and the trades (65,985)" (Statistics Canada 2023). Within academic literature and media in Canada and beyond, Filipinos are often visible through representations of domestic helpers and nurses, while other experiences are marginalized (Ball 2004; Bryan 2017; McElhinny et al. 2012;

Ronquillo et al. 2011; Tungohan 2023). Filipinos thus experience hypervisibility through stereotypes which are closely tied to their labour, many of which are deemed as 'essential' work; but on the other hand, the vast majority of their experiences and struggles remain invisible (McElhinny et al. 2012, p. 5). For example, Filipino workers often need to "seek and accept survival jobs rather than waiting for an appropriate opening to come along" in order to continue sending remittances to their families, leading to low-paid and precarious work (Kelly et al. 2009, p. 18). Filipino workers also experience racialization, financial barriers to accreditation, and deprofessionalization (Kelly et al. 2009, 26–33).

Immigrant Women in Winnipeg's Garment Industry

Historically, Filipino labour migration has been beneficial for the garment industry of Winnipeg, which has long employed female migrant workers from various ethnocultural communities, (Golz et al. 1991, p. 9–10). Garment trades began in Winnipeg through the demand in clothing from farmers and labourers, as well as white-collar professionals (Giesbrecht 2010, p. 6). In the 1910s, the garment industry in Winnipeg began growing as merchants and wholesalers started investing in the industry because the costs of production in Winnipeg were competitive against Eastern manufacturers due to affordable electricity rates and reduced wages (Berkowski 1989, pp. 7-8). Much of the subsequent growth in the industry can be attributed to the transformation of consumer demand for clothing, as "[a] new emphasis on ready-made clothing that was fashionable, stylish and affordable for the middle and lower classes took shape in North America", and as clothing became widely distributed through chain stores (Berkowski 1989, p. 10).

From its early beginnings, the labour force of the Winnipeg garment industry has been primarily composed of immigrant women. For instance, in 1937, 1,000 of the 1,223 workers

employed in Winnipeg's garment manufacturing factories were women (Giesbrecht 2010, p. 6). In particular, women from Eastern European ethnocultural groups (e.g., Ukrainian, Polish, Jewish) who were newcomers to Canada comprised much of the labour force in the Winnipeg garment industry in the early 20th century, as "[t]he garment industry was one of the few spheres in which female immigrants could obtain employment in Winnipeg's discriminatory and paternalistic economy" (Carbone 2015; Giesbrecht 2010, p. 6). Because of the harsh working conditions within the garment industry at the time, efforts were made to collectively challenge these conditions from the 1920s to the 1940s by unions such as the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Unions (ILGWU), the International Fur Workers' Union (IFWU), the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA), the United Garment Workers (UGW), and the Industrial Union of Needle Trades Workers (IUNTW) (Giesbrecht 2010, p. 9). The IUNTW, in particular, was instrumental in mobilizing garment workers in militant actions against the sweatshop conditions that they faced, and in doing so, aided in the socialization of immigrant working classes into Canadian society. However, militant actions became less frequent as the ILGWU took control of garment industry organizing by 1935, adopting a more accommodative approach to negotiations with employers (Giesbrecht 2010, pp. 13-4).

Later into the 20th century, the character of the garment industry's labour force shifted alongside changes in immigrant populations coming into Winnipeg. By the 1980s, Asian garment workers from countries such as the Philippines, India, China, South Korea, Vietnam, and Pakistan made up the majority of the labour force (Mossman 2006, p. 42, citing Ghorayshi 1990). Many of the Filipino garment workers in Winnipeg at the time were recruited through government-sponsored, industry-wide programs from the late 1960s to the early 2000s (Mossman 2006, p. 48; Stephens 2005, p. 42). A number of these workers had developed their

skills in garment manufacturing in their home country, through kin-based relationships and employment, with additional training opportunities coming from the Manitoba Fashion Institute (MFI) and through unions such as the ACTWU and the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) (Mossman 2005, pp. 53–55). Filipino garment workers' employment experiences were shaped by the need to send remittances, pushing them to low-wage, often precarious work in workplaces that were difficult to unionize (Camia 2012, pp. 43–49).

Migrant Labour and Precarious Work in the Neoliberal Era in Canada

As experienced by the Filipino garment workers in Winnipeg, the rise of neoliberalism in the 1980s led to a changing configuration of work and immigration in Canada, especially due to increased international migration from developing to developed countries, which was driven by the economic effects of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) and labour export regimes in countries such as the Philippines and Mexico (Henaway 2023, p. 12; Stasiulis and Bakan 2003, p. 41). These shifts in the global economy occurred alongside significant changes in Canadian immigration policy. In 1992, Bill C-86 was introduced to enhance enforcement and control within the immigration system (Knowles 1997, p. 239). An emphasis on independent-class immigrants was made in within this era, particularly through bill C-11, otherwise known as the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA). Established in 1992, the IRPA, which sought to streamline the immigration process, contained provisions to allow "host state employers to hire migrants on a temporary basis in positions that… cannot be filled domestically" (Vosko 2022, p. 132). This led to the establishment of the temporary employment schemes such as the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP), wherein employment is tied to specific employers (Vosko 2022, p. 133). In the same year as the IRPA was passed, the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP)

was also introduced to succeed the previous temporary employment authorization program introduced in 1973 which allowed for the entry of migrant domestic workers (Tungohan 2023, p. 36). These stood in stark contrast to the Federal Skilled Workers Program (FSWP), which was introduced in 2002 and sought to attract high-skilled workers as permanent immigrants (Abu-Laban, Tungohan, and Gabriel 2022, p. 109). Influenced by these dynamics and policy changes, the face of Canada's labour force has been changing drastically over the past few decades, with "a rapid rise in the number of new immigrants and non-permanent residents on study or work permits" between 2022 and 2024 (Scott 2025, p. 13). Today, one-third of Canada's work force is comprised of racialized workers (Scott 2025, p. 15). Within Manitoba, immigrants made up 19.7% of the population in 2021 – a percentage that has been increasing since 2001 (Fig. 7) (Statistics Canada 2022a). The Philippines remains as one of the top countries of origin for immigrants in Manitoba, accounting for 27.3% of its immigrant population in 2021 (Statistics Canada 2022a). In terms of immigration category, majority (70.5%) of the permanent residents admitted to Manitoba between 2016 to 2021 were economic immigrants, many of whom were admitted under the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP) (Immigrate Manitoba 2021). In terms of non-permanent residents, the number of temporary foreign workers and international students has also been increasing in Manitoba (Immigrate Manitoba 2021).

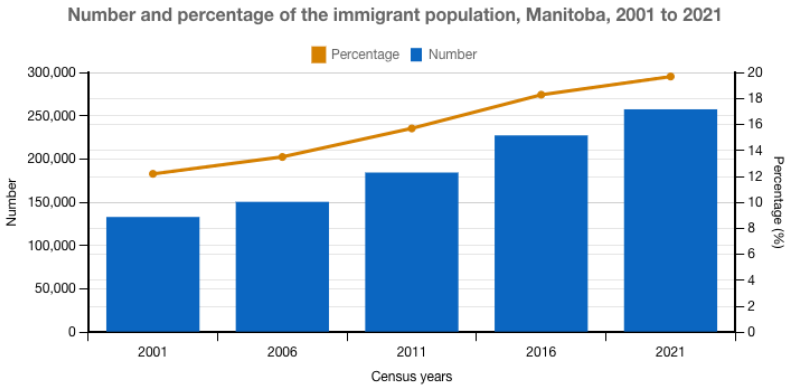

Figure 7: Number and percentage of the immigrant population, Manitoba, 2001 to 2021 (Statistics Canada 2022a)

Non-standard or precarious forms of employment also rose in the 1980s due to declining labour protections and regulations (Bernhardt 2015, p. 5; Henaway 2023, p. 64). Along with the increasing number of racialized immigrants in Canada, the labour market in the neoliberal era has been "characterized by a continuum of precarious wage work", which is influenced by social location (Cranford and Vosko 2006, p. 60).Vosko (2010) defines precarious employment as types of work deviating away from the standard employment relationship (SER) formed in the post-war era, which was characterized by permanent, full-time employment, income security, and access to benefits (pp. 1-2). Similar to this definition, Kalleberg and Vallas (2017) define precarious work as "uncertain, unstable, and insecure and in which employees bear the risks of work (as opposed to businesses or the government) and receive limited social benefits and statutory protections" (p. 1). In addition to this, they state that "consequences of [precarious work] are not restricted to work and the workplace but also affect many non-work domains, including individual health and well-being, family formation… and the nature of social life more generally" (Kalleberg and Vallas 2017, p. 2). Within the context of neoliberalism, precarious work has been theorized to politically function as a "mode of domination" by rendering workers uncertain and unstable (Kalleberg and Vallas 2017, p. 4).

Within a capitalist structure, the dictates of capital renders groups of workers precarious on the basis of their social locations, including gender, race, and citizenship, thus making it likely for marginalized workers to engage in precarious employment. Even before the neoliberal era, the SER was not universal and was supported by a gender contract which delineated the gendered (and many times, racialized) division of labour between reproduction in the private sphere (i.e., the home) and production in the public sphere (Vosko 2010, p. 7). As such, the notion of SER is grounded in the valuation of certain types of workers (White, male, able-bodied

workers) at the expense of others, who are, in turn, devalued as labourers and are thus more likely to undertake precarious work. These hierarchies are reflected in the findings of a study from Cranford and Vosko (2006), which found a "strong relationship between racialized-gendered social locations and dimensions of precarious employment, regardless of form" (Cranford and Vosko 2006, p. 60). Along with gender, the SER was exclusive on the basis of race and citizenship, with "workers of color… disproportionately overrepresented at the most precarious end of the continuum within the Canadian workforce" (B. Anderson 2010, p. 3). With the persisting likelihood of precarious employment for racialized and gendered workers, it is important to acknowledge that precarious work is not a new phenomenon for these groups of workers, especially for workers who migrated from the Global South, where precarity is often the norm rather than the exception (Munck 2013). In Canada, racialized and gendered precarity is particularly seen in the case of migrant workers. Citing Lewis et al. and Zou, Frozzini and Law (2017) use the term "hyperprecarity" to describe how migrant workers experience a disproportionately higher degree of precarity due to their existence as precarious workers and as precarious citizens, thus having limited rights and security within the states and organizations in which they work (pp. 13-4). Central to these experiences of precarity is the role that citizenship plays in determining the rights and protections that migrant workers have access to, which are interdependent on class, gender, and racial oppression (Stasiulis and Bakan 2003, p. 2; Vosko 2010, p. 11–2). This is consistent within the contemporary labour market of Canada, wherein female migrant workers experiencing intersecting spheres of racialization and gender disproportionately engage in precarious employment (Cranford, Vosko, and Zukewich 2003, p. 456).

The work of Cranford and Vosko (2006) has been particularly influential in terms of determining what constitutes as precarious work by operationalizing its dimensions. Within their definition, precarious work comes to be determined by four dimensions, including earnings (i.e., wages or income), social wage (i.e., non-wage benefits), regulatory protection (e.g., legislation or collective agreements) and control (i.e., degree of influence over the labour process), and contingency (i.e., job security). Within these dimensions, immigrant workers, particularly newcomers, have been shown to fare worse than their Canadian-born counterparts. In 2021, immigrants who landed in Manitoba between 2016 to 2021 exhibited a poverty rate of 15.4%, which is double the poverty rate experienced by non-immigrants (7.5%) (Statistics Canada 2022c). In the same year, the prevalence of low income (before tax) for immigrants who arrived between 2016 and 2019 in Manitoba (22.3%) was also higher than that of non-immigrants (17.4%) (Statistics Canada 2022b). The likelihood of newcomers to earn less than Canadian-born workers is contextualized by their initial employment experiences, which are likely to be precarious. For example, Zhang and Banerjee (2021) show that the adversities that immigrants initially face within the Canadian labour market (e.g., unemployment, part-time work) have negative consequences on their long-term earnings. Moreover, in comparison to Canadian-born workers, the quality of the jobs that immigrants have are objectively worse due to "less access to collective agreement coverage, training, various extended benefits, as well as lower wages" (Lamb and Banerjee 2025, p. 299). In turn, these employment opportunities are often influenced by "a lack of credential recognition, racial discrimination, and a requirement for Canadian experience" (J. Thomas 2021, p. 191).

Unionization as an Intervention against Precarious Work

Within Cranford and Vosko's (2006) dimensions of precarious employment, unions play an important role in determining the level of precarity workers experience in various ways. Unions directly improve upon the dimensions of regulatory protection and control through collective bargaining (Cranford and Vosko 2006, p. 49). In line with this, unions have also been shown to provide "greater income, security, and benefits to unionized and, in some cases, non-unionized workers" (J. Anderson et al. 2006, p. 308). Historically, unions and the broader labour movement were also instrumental in winning significant gains for workers in the developed world in the early 20th century through their political organizing. These struggles shaped the SER through securing decent wages, benefits, and regulatory protections for a select population of workers (Vosko 2010a, p. 5). However, unionization rates have declined in many advanced economies, including Canada, where unionization rates fell from 38% in 1981 to 29% in 2022 (Morissette 2022). Within the private sector, the decline in unionization rates is more pronounced, decreasing from 32.2% in 1970 to 15.3% in 2021 (Doorey and Stanford 2023). Much of this decline can be attributed to the manufacturing sector, where "the share of employees… covered by a collective bargaining agreement [fell] from 36.2% in 1997 to 22.8% in 2023" (Statistics Canada 2024a). In Canada, these declines in unionization rates are driven by anti-union legislation at the federal and provincial levels, such as back-to-work laws and dismantling card-check legislation (Smith and Stevens 2019, p. 460). Elsewhere, union busting tactics have also been utilized by employers to eliminate the threat of unionization, notably within the UK and the US (Dundon 2002; Gall 2004; Logan 2006).

Along with the decline in union coverage in Canada, the histories of exclusion within unions on the lines of racial and gender lines complicates their ability to diminish the likelihood

of precarious work for racialized immigrant women in Canada. On the basis of gender, unions have historically been dominated by men, have discriminated against women, as its "structures and processes… perpetuate male privilege" (Bentham 2016, p. 105). Similarly, racism is evident in the history of unions and the broader labour movement in Canada, with workers of colour being excluded from unions from the 1880s to the 1920s (Das Gupta 2016, p. 183). Even when racial and gender-based discrimination were eliminated within unions, gendered and racialized workers, especially immigrants, continue to experience barriers to unionization related to their identity, which influences their likelihood of engaging in precarious work (Verma et al. 2016, p. 694). Because of this, racialized immigrants are less likely to be unionized compared to Canadian-born workers (Verma et al. 2016, p. 684). Social locations therefore determine both the likelihood that workers engage in precarious employment, as well as their likelihood to work in unionized workplaces.

Significance of the Study

In contextualizing this study within the history of labour migration, unionization, and precarious work, it becomes possible to situate the significance of this study within today's political environment. Amidst the rise in precarious employment and economic migration, and the concurrent decline in private sector unionization, the workers at Canada Goose (many of whom are immigrant women) were able to succeed in unionizing within an otherwise challenging context compounded by their intersecting social locations. This project therefore has two main contributions. First, documenting the union certification drive in Canada Goose from 2019 to 2021 may contribute to unions seeking to organize workplaces which similarly have a predominantly immigrant female workforce. It is valuable to develop upon union organizing strategies for marginalized and precarious workers because of the ongoing challenge for unions

to combat precarious employment and to organize racialized and gendered workers (Alberti, Holgate, and Tapia 2013). Second, understanding the effects of the union on the precarious employment of workers at Canada Goose can generate valuable insights that could be used by Workers United Canada Council to improve upon the union. Likewise, other unions may benefit through having a better understanding of the demands of racialized and gendered immigrant workers.

Positionality Statement

The positionality and identity of the researcher often drive studies in feminist political economy and influence their academic work. On a personal level, the significance of this project lies in my identity as a first-generation Filipino immigrant woman who, like many of the women in this project, continues to navigate the tumultuous conditions experienced by immigrants in Winnipeg. Experiences of precarity are weaved into the journeys of immigrant women and their families who travelled from the Philippines to Canada for a better life, including my own.

Structure of the Thesis

Amidst the political economic context of precarious and migrant work in the Philippines and Canada, this project aims to document the unionizing process of the Canada Goose Workers Union (CGWU); the conditions which led to their decision to unionize in late 2021; and the experiences of Filipino immigrant women with the union during and after their vote to unionize. In doing so, the study aims to answer the question: do unionization and broader community-based, grassroots worker mobilization efforts improve the disproportionate experiences of precarity by immigrant Filipino women in Manitoba? And if so, what kinds of improvements has it made for living and working conditions of the union membership of CGWU who are Filipina immigrant workers?

This thesis will proceed as follows: a literature review on the intersections of precarious employment, migration, and unionization was conducted to explore previous scholarship on these topics, and to understand the gaps that this project fills within the literature. I then situate this project within its theoretical foundations in feminist political economy (FPE), which informs the community-based research (CBR) approach and research design employed in this study. The last two chapters comprehensively narrate the stories told by workers during interviews, which are then put into conversation with the broader literature and theories which ground this project.

Literature Review

Understanding the intersecting phenomenon of precarity, gender, and migration within the context of Filipino migrant workers in Canada necessitates an examination of previous literature within these three areas. In general, the studies included here focused on at least one of three key areas: (1) migration and migrant work; (2) precarious work, and (3) unionization and labour mobilization strategies. Much of the literature were also positioned at the crux of these three areas. In examining the experiences of Filipino migrant labour in Canada, an emphasis is placed on studies involving the contexts of Canada and of the Philippines. Following the theoretical background of the study, this review highlights previous literature which utilized intersectional, feminist, and/or political economy approaches. A snowball approach was used in searching for literature, which was primarily conducted through the UM Libraries database.

Precarious Work in the Neoliberal Context

Previous literature on precarious work in the context of Canada and beyond have highlighted its emergence as a consequence of neoliberal policies enacted in the early 1980s (Bernhardt 2015, 1; Cranford and Vosko 2006, 44; Kalleberg and Vallas 2017, 31:1; Però 2020, 901; Però and Downey 2024, 141; Vosko 2010b, 73). Following Harvey's (2007) conceptualization of the neoliberal state, policies enacted by the Canadian state in terms of the labour force aimed to increase the flexibility of labour. Within Canada, these policies comprised a plan from the Trudeau government "to stimulate the ailing economy [including a] dramatic restructuring of collective bargaining rights (especially for public-sector workers), cuts to federal spending, and altering the level and coverage of public services" (Evans and Smith 2015, p. 5). To workers across the country and within Manitoba, this meant a greater level of precarization due to a scaling back of protective social services, the eroding bargaining power and presence of

unions, and a disempowered labour movement (Harney 2024, p. 4; Rose 2019, p. 69; Smith and Stevens 2019, p. 460).

Precarious work has been conceptualized in relation to the standard employment relationship (SER), which is "defined by a full-time continuous employment relationship, where the worker has one employer, work on the employer's premises under direct supervision, and has access to comprehensive benefits and entitlements" (Vosko 2010b, 1). Emerging after the Second World War in many developed countries such as Canada, the SER was restricted to White male workers who served as the 'breadwinner' of the family within a Keynesian welfare state which allowed families to survive on a single income (Bernhardt 2015, 1; Cranford and Vosko 2006, 44; Vosko 2010, 2; Vosko and Clark 2009, 27). The decline of the welfare state in the 1980s and the subsequent rise of neoliberalism has led to a decline in the SER as labour flexibilization and a disempowered labour movement contributed to a rise in employment arrangements outside of the SER, including temporary work, part-time work, and fixed-term work (Bernhardt 2015, p. 1; Kalleberg and Hewison 2013, p. 277; Lindio-McGovern 2007, p. 22; Vosko 2010b, p. 1). Hence, precarious work describes employment arrangements outside the SER, wherein work is characterized with uncertainty and risk (Kalleberg and Vallas 2017, p. 2). In more specific terms, precarious work is defined as "work for renumeration characterized by uncertainty, low income, and limited social benefits and statutory entitlements" (Vosko 2010b, p. 2). Extending this definition, Kalleberg and Vallas (2017) note that in precarious employment arrangements, workers "bear the risks of work as opposed to businesses or the government" as they "receive limited social benefits and statutory protections" (p. 1). In terms of the operationalization of precarious employment, Cranford and Vosko (2006) have conceptualized four dimensions of precarious wage work, namely earnings, social wage, regulatory protection, and control and

contingency (p. 48). These four dimensions informs the manner in which this study measures precarity in relation to migrant workers.

Similar to the SER, precarious employment is shaped by aspects of social location such as race, gender, and citizenship. Vosko's work in defining precarious employment and its relationship to gender has been particularly beneficial in defining the gendered formations of precarious work historically (Cranford, Vosko, and Zukewich 2003; Cranford and Vosko 2006; Vosko and Clark 2009; Vosko 2010b; 2022). During the post-war era, a gender contract was essential to the maintenance of the SER, which encompassed "the normative and material basis around which sex/gender divisions of paid and unpaid labour operate in a given society" (Vosko 2010, p. 6, citing Rubery 1998b, p. 23). Parallel to male breadwinners performing paid work in the public sphere, women performed unpaid labour in the private sphere of the home, reproducing the labour power necessary to single-earner household. As such, the domestic responsibilities prescribed to women restricted them to precarious, flexible forms of work which allowed them to work and uphold domestic responsibilities simultaneously. Alongside this gender contract, the SER was also shaped by notions of the 'citizen-worker', wherein citizenship becomes a key determinant of the rights and protections workers are able to access (Vosko 2010b, p. 10). In line with this, Bernhardt (2015) also notes that race shaped the experiences of racialized workers prior to and during the post-war era due to the discriminatory nature of immigration policies and labour movements at the time, both of which contributing to the disproportionate experiences of precarious work by racialized workers (pp. 4-5). Thus, social locations such as race, gender, and citizenship play an integral role in determining access to SER, and conversely, the likelihood that workers engage in precarious work.

It is also important to note that although precarious employment has become more common during the neoliberal era, it is not unique to this period. Similar to Bernhardt's (2015) focus on the precarious experiences of racialized workers in Canada prior to neoliberalism, previous studies have also emphasized the role of immigration policy in historically maintaining the precarious experiences of migrant workers through racialization, thus experiencing precarious work even before the neoliberal period (Liu 2019, 171; Mooten 2021, p. 6; Sharma 2019, p. 62; Walia 2010, p. 73; Stasiulis and Bakan 2003b, p. 141; Stasiulis 2020, p. 27). In her analysis of the gendered dimension of precarious work and of the SER, Vosko (2010) also notes that women were historically excluded from standard forms of employment (pp. 8-9). Scholars focusing on the context of the Global South also point out that precarity is a consistent feature in developing economies wherein labour does not usually enjoy the same bargaining power and social protections that workers in developed countries have access to (Chan, Nair, and Rhomberg 2019, p. 471; Kalleberg and Hewison 2013, p. 273; Munck 2013, p. 752). Therefore, precarious work is not a new development in the realm of labour; rather, racialized and gendered workers have historically experienced disproportionate levels of precarious employment both in the context of developed countries such as Canada and in developing economies. The rise of precarious employment accompanying neoliberalism is thus an exacerbation of the issue to broader populations of workers.

Migrant Work in the Neoliberal Context

Similar to precarious employment, literature on contemporary migration have highlighted its rise and configuration amidst a globalizing, neoliberal environment (Castles 2002, p. 1144; Czaika and de Haas 2014, p. 284; Munck 2010, p. 160; Sassen 2000, p. 503). Studies, particularly from the field of economics, have endeavoured to measure the phenomenon of

migration across and within countries (Czaika and de Haas 2014, p. 283; Fasani et al. 2020; Hatton 2014). Beyond economics, a particular focus has also been placed on the form that migration takes under globalization: for example, Castles (2002) examined the new configurations of migration in recent decades through examining the "transformation of the material and cultural practices associated with migration and community formation" (p. 1143). In relation to migration within the neoliberal context, previous studies have also placed an emphasis on new configurations of migrant work in which workers hold precarious or temporary forms of citizenship and residency. Within the context of Canada, this includes studies examining the pool of temporary migrant workers sustained by immigration programs such as the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP), the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP), and the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) (Gardner, Magsumbol, and Tungohan 2021; Henaway 2023; Walia 2010). Many of these analyses explore the ways in which these programs enable Canada to maintain a pool of temporary, vulnerable labour to meet its demands for low-skilled essential work in sectors such as agriculture, care, and manufacturing.

Literature on immigration policy, particularly within the context of Canada, emphasize its configuration amidst neoliberalism and conversely, its role in the maintenance of a flexible, precarious pool of labour. Stasiulis (2020), for example, examines the "the technologies of disposability" present within Canadian immigration law and provincial/territorial employment legislation and its role in keeping temporary migrant workers vulnerable to exploitation. Liu (2019) incorporates previous operationalizations of precarious employment from Fuller and Vosko (2008) in analyzing the precarious employment experienced by Canadian immigrants through an intersectional lens. She concludes that the neoliberal nature of Canadian immigration policy, which is demand-driven and stratifies labour through skill selection, continues Canada's

"reliance on "(im)migrants as commodified labour" rather than as nation building Canadian citizens" (Liu 2019, p. 172, citing Fleras 2015). Similar to Bernhardt's (2015) emphasis on racialization within precarious employment, an intersectional approach allows Liu (2019) to show that processes of racialization and gender within immigration policy work to stratify labour and to maintain the precarity that migrant workers face. Similar studies which utilize approaches within political economy analyze the contemporary importance of citizenship and borders in delineating the access (and the lack thereof) that certain populations have to workers' rights, all of which become important when discussing the experiences of precarious employment by migrant workers (Sharma 2019; Stasiulis and Bakan 2003b; Walia 2010).

Filipino Migrant Labour and Precarious Work

Historically, the experiences of many Filipino migrant workers are found at the intersection of precarious work and precarious citizenship. Previous studies on Filipino migrant labour have emphasised the role of the Philippine state in creating these conditions through the labour export program (LEP) beginning in the 1970s (Alipio 2019; Lindio-McGovern 2007; Rodriguez 2010). As part of the neoliberal policies implemented at the time, Rodriguez (2010) defines labour export or labour brokerage as "a neoliberal strategy.. [in] which the Philippine state mobilizes its citizens and sends them abroad to work for employers throughout the world while generating a "profit" from… remittances" (p. x). Although labour export was first implemented as a temporary solution to growing unemployment during the Marcos regime in the 1970s, it has become a central tenet of Philippine state policy in succeeding administrations after Marcos, increasingly being bureaucratized through the creation of government bodies devoted to facilitating the process of recruiting migrant workers (Rodriguez 2010, p. 22). Rodriguez (2010) emphasizes the role that labour export plays in "addressing the failures of so-called

“development”” as a form of trickle-up development, wherein “individual migrants’ earnings abroad become a source of foreign capital for the Philippine state” (p. xvi). Similarly, Lindio-McGovern (2007) considers labour export as one of the many interlocking features of neoliberal globalization in the Philippines, including policies which promote economic liberalization, deregulation, privatization, finance capital, and labour flexibilization (p. 16). It is also important that the effects of these neoliberal policies on increasing the levels of economic inequality in the Philippines contribute to the precarious economic conditions which lead Filipino workers to migrate. This is precisely what Alipio (2019) argues in exploring the translocal experiences of precarity by migrant workers. Citing Ridout and Schneider (2012), she conceptualizes precarity in the context of Filipino migrant labour as “lives lived in someone else’s hands”, wherein the historical underdevelopment of the Philippines under colonialism and neoliberal globalization intertwine to form the precarious conditions Filipino workers face today (p. 138). Therefore, precarious work is maintained structurally by the Philippine state through neoliberal policies such as the labour export program (LEP), and in many cases, can also be found as a key aspect of the lived experiences of migrant workers in their host countries. To many Filipino migrant workers, precarious work is not a new phenomenon, as it is within developed countries such as Canada; it is the norm.

Considerable attention has been placed on the gendered nature of Filipino migration in recent decades, especially in the case of migration occurring from the Philippines to Canada. Barber (2000) identifies that “Canada is a preferred destination because the conditions of entrance and employment, from a Philippine perspective, seem remarkably more attractive than most other destination countries” (p. 409). In the context of Canada, much of the previous literature on Filipino migrant labour focus on care work performed by Filipino migrant women

which began in the 1970s (Ball 2004; Barber 2008; Novek 2013; Ronquillo et al. 2011; Tungohan 2023). These include studies focusing on the migration of Filipino nurses and healthcare aides to Canada to fulfill labour demand (Novek 2013; Ronquillo et al. 2011), and those documenting the experiences of Filipino domestic caregivers within the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP) (Barber 2008; Stasiulis and Bakan 2003b; Tungohan 2023). Despite focusing on two different areas of care, several studies in both groups emphasize the gendered nature of care work and migration, both of which have historically become dominated by women in the case of the Philippines. Other studies on Filipino migrants have also identified that Filipino migrants choose Canadian urban centres such as Toronto as their destination due to greater probability of social mobility, permanent residence, and citizenship in Canada compared to immigration policies elsewhere (Cristaldi and Darden 2011), leading to the current geographical composition of Filipino migrant communities in urban Canada (McElhinny et al. 2012).

Unionization against Precarious Work

Focusing on the precarious experiences of migrant workers more broadly, it is evident that the disproportionate experiences of precarity of racialized and gendered migrant workers is a growing concern that remains in need of a remedy. One of the solutions emphasized in previous literature, which will be discussed in this thesis extensively, is the process of organizing workers into unions (J. Anderson et al. 2006, p. 301; Chan, Nair, and Rhomberg 2019, p. 479; Keune and Pedaci 2020, p. 151; Però 2020, p. 907; Però and Downey 2024, p. 141). In comparing union to non-union jobs through data from the Statistics Canada Workplace and Employer Survey and the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Anderson et al. (2006) found that union status and social location (gender, race) affect the likelihood in which workers experience precarity, with non-unionized workers of color being the most precarious (p. 312). They also found that

unionization reduces precariousness for workers of colour as measured through dimensions of social wage, which encompasses benefits beyond earnings such as insurance and pension, albeit benefitting less from unionization compared to unionized White workers (Anderson, Beaton, and Laxer 2006, p. 312). However, evidence from Lewchuk (2021) on the experiences of workers within the Greater Toronto and Hamilton regions between 2011 and 2017 showed that workers without SER are less likely to be unionized, with only 19.8% of the non-SER workers in their sample being unionized (in comparison to 29.4% of SER workers belonging to unionized workplaces). Furthermore, even when their workplaces are unionized, the gains that they experience from unionization are limited in terms of the stability of work and pay, work hours, benefits, and income (Lewchuk 2021, 194). Thus, while it may be possible to improve upon precarious employment through unions and labour organizing, challenges exist in terms of identifying effective strategies towards organizing precarious workers, including migrant and immigrant labour.

Furthermore, unionization as a whole has experienced a marked decline amidst neoliberalism and its associated changes in labour legislation in Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada 2015, 1; Rose 2019, 66; Smith and Stevens 2019, 460). However, a study on trends in unionization rates in Canada from Morisette (2022) found that "unionization rates fell by almost 11 percentage points in full-time jobs but rose slightly (by about 3 percentage points) in part-time jobs" from 1981 to 2022 (p. 2). It was also found that unionization rates remained stable among women within this period, but declined for men (Morissette 2022, p. 2). Within Manitoba, this trend is consistent: between 1997 and 2022, the union coverage rate for women in Manitoba only decreased from 38.3% to 37.4%, while for men, it decreased more substantially from 37.3% to 31.1% in the same period (Statistics Canada 2024b). However, none

of these datasets took into consideration the component of race and immigrant status, thus making it unclear if migrant and racialized workers benefited from the stability of union coverage rates for women in Manitoba and in Canada more broadly.

Nevertheless, previous literature on labour legislation in Canada have made it clear that anti-union legislation has emerged as part of neoliberal strategies towards labour flexibilization and deregulation. Smith and Stevens (2019) emphasize that "[in addition to] governments undermining labour's collective abilities to legally strike, recent events suggest that Canada is entering a new and complex phase of anti-unionism" (p. 460). They add that at the provincial level, "legislative tools have been utilized to undermine or eliminate the ability of unionized workers to bargain or strike, as well as inhibiting the capacity of non-unionized workers to successfully certify" (Smith and Stevens 2019, 460). Within the context of Manitoba, Harney (2024) brings to focus the effects of the use of scab labour and mandatory voting processes in union certification drives, which have been found to decrease the chances of success for unionization efforts within Manitoba (pp. 6-7). Conversely, anti-scab legislation and card-check certification have positive effects on the likelihood of success for union certification drives. While card-check certification was adopted by Manitoba prior to the 1970s, it was replaced by mandatory vote union certification in the 1980s, and anti-scab legislation was never adopted in the province (Harney 2024, pp. 6–7). Therefore, unionization has declined in Canada not only due to changes in economic conditions, but also because of the emergence of anti-union legislation at the federal and provincial level (Harney 2024, p. 9; Smith and Stevens 2019, p.460).

Beyond the effects of government attitudes and legislation on unions, a body of literature has investigated management suppression tactics during union certification processes, which has

occurred in concurrence to changes in union legislation during the neoliberal era (Dundon 2002, p. 234; Gall 2004, p. 38; Logan 2006, p. 651). Studying the context of British Columbia, Riddell (2001) found that employer suppression was effective in undermining union organizing in contexts which have mandatory voting certification (p. 405). Within the tactics included in his study, dismissal tactics, where workers associated with the union drive are laid off, were found to be extremely effective, with group coercion being the second most effective tactic (Riddell 2001, p. 406). Elsewhere, studies have also explored different tactics or strategies employed by firms in response to union certification drives (Ayentimi et al. 2019; Cooper et al. 2009; Deshpande 2006; Dundon 2002; Gall 2004). In earlier studies, the types of employer tactics were either categorized as union substitution or avoidance, where employers avoid the union threat by improve the conditions of and their relations with workers as a 'substitute' of the union, or union suppression, where employers aggressively respond to the union threat by undermining union certification drives through union busting or committing unfair labour practices (Deshpande 2006, p. 151; Gall 2004, p. 37 citing Beaumont 1987, and Blyton and Turnbull 1998). In addition to this dichotomy, firms may also employ a more neutral stance in response to unions, leaving employees to decide whether they would like to unionize or not (Deshpande 2006, p. 152). In a study on employer tactics used against union certification drives in the trucking industry in the US, Deshpande (2006) found that union suppression led more unions to lose certification votes than union avoidance tactics, while unions dealing with neutral firms were all able to win their elections (pp. 153-4). Union suppression and avoidance were also utilized by firms in Australia, often employing both tactics as a "part of a multilayered, overlapping employer strategy aimed at de-collectivizing employment relations and enhancing managerial prerogative and control" (Cooper et al. 2009, p. 340). However, the tactics used by employers often go beyond the

dichotomy of union suppression and avoidance. Using vernacular used by organizers, Roy (1980) thus develops a framework which categorizes these wide array of employer tactics into 'fear tactics', 'sweet stuff', and ‘evil stuff’. Fear tactics involve tactics which intend to instill fear into workers to undermine a union drive, including the fear of dismissal, or the fear of closing plant (Roy 1980, p. 398). ‘Sweet stuff’ is similar to union avoidance in that it encompasses improvements made in working conditions to undercut the union drive, but it also includes personal favours (Roy 1980, p. 405). ‘Evil stuff’ go beyond ‘fear tactics’ in that the goal is to develop anti-union rhetoric within workers (Roy 1980, p. 409). Gall (2004) develops upon this framework by adding four more categories, namely ‘fatal stuff’, ‘tame stuff’, ‘awkward stuff’, and ‘harm stuff’. A summary of these tactics can be found below (Table 2). Applying these definitions to firms in the UK, Dundon (2002) found that a variety of these approaches were used in an ad hoc and opportunistic manner (p. 237). Within the Global South, Ayentimi et al. (2019) use this framework in understanding employer tactics against unionization of multinational enterprises (MNEs) in Ghana. They find that, although both union suppression and substitution strategies were both used by MNEs, union suppression strategies were used in ‘corridor tactics’, which are informal or undocumented. They emphasize that these corridor tactics prove to be beneficial in areas such as free-trade zones “where there are fewer controls and regulations governing work, the workplace and labour rights for the purposes of encouraging FDI” (Ayentimi, Burgess, and Dayaram 2019, p. 393). In addition to union avoidance strategies, firms have also began engaging in non-union representation (NER) to cull the union threat in places such as the Republic of Ireland (Donaghey et al. 2012). In the US, a union avoidance industry has developed around consultants, lawyers, and strike management firms which aid in suppressing unions (Logan 2006). The influence of this industry was apparent in recent attempts

to unionize Amazon workers in Alabama (Logan 2021). Thus, a wide variety of strategies have been developed among employers to curb the union threat.

Table 2: Non-union management control approaches (Dundon 2002, citing Roy 1980 and Gall 2001)

Non-union approach	Type of anti-union behaviour and control
Fear stuff[1]	*Union suppression*: Employer behaviour here includes blatant intimidation of workers, the objective to instil a 'fear' (real or otherwise) of managerial reprisals to possible unionisation.
Sweet stuff[1]	*Union substitution*: Management argue that unions are unnecessary, with better terms and conditions and sophisticated employee voice channels to resolve any grievances.
Evil stuff[1]	*Ideological opposition to unions*: Management articulates the view that unions are 'reds under the beds', and will be destructive to the company performance.
Fatal stuff[1]	*Blatant refusal*: Employer behaviour here includes refusal to recognise a union, or at best refusal to 'bargain in good faith'.
Awkward stuff[2]	*Stonewalling*: Managers create what appear to be legitimate obstacles to union recognition, effectively employing 'delaying' tactics.
Tame stuff[2]	*Damaged limitations*: Employer behaviour can take the form of 'sweetheart' deals, partially recognising 'moderate' unions or creating internal (managerial controlled) staff associations.
Harm stuff[2]	*By-passing*: Employer behaviour seeks to effectively marginalise collective employee voice, often through specific non-union communication channels.

[1] Roy's (1980) original classification
[2] Gall's (2001) additional typologies

From an intersectional approach, factors of social location such as gender, race, and citizenship also play a role in the experiences of workers with unionization, especially due to restrictions on employment and union membership in terms of gender, race, and citizenship in the past. Previous literature have identified the gendered nature of unions in terms of their structure, which originated from predominantly male labour organizing in the post-war era (Ahmed and Hegewisch 2021; Bentham 2016; Crain 1991). As women began entering the workforce and increased their presence in unions in the 1960s, however, "scrutiny [increased]

regarding the representativeness and inclusiveness of union leadership, internal decision-making structures, and collective bargaining agendas" (Bentham 2016, pp. 103–4). Despite these initial barriers to union participation, women were able to mobilize for some gains in terms of increasing visibility for women's issues such as childcare and parental leave, developing childcare options in the workplace, and implementing affirmative action and anti-violence programs (Bentham 2016, pp. 105–6; de Wolff 2006). One considerable milestone was the implementation of anti-discrimination policies based on sex and gender, which was incorporated in a majority of collective bargaining agreements by 1986 (Bentham 2016, pp. 108–9). Beyond unions, broader feminist mobilizations have occurred in Canada, most prominently during the rejuvenation of the women's movement in Canada, which critically examined the role of women in the workplace (Luxton 2001; Sangster 2000). Despite these gains, Bentham (2016) remains unimpressed by the lack of challenges to internal union structures which remain patriarchal in nature (p. 127), similar to Crain's (1991) and Coles and Yates' (2012) insights on the ineffectiveness of unions in organizing women workers.

Similar to the effects of gendered workers within unions, racialized workers also have a complicated history with unions and the labour movement as a whole in Canada. Das Gupta (2016) emphasizes the exclusionist attitude of unions, the labour movement, and of Canada as a whole towards racialized workers, most of which were migrant workers, prior to the 1930s (p. 183). At the time, Canadian immigration policy was long-driven by a desire to preserve and build on White Anglo-Saxon society through the exclusion of racialized workers via selective immigration policy which, at times, explicitly banned or restricted racialized workers from entering Canada (Abu-Laban, Tungohan, and Gabriel 2022, p. 33). Similar to the relationship of the labour movement and migrant workers in the US (Milkman 2011), Canadian unions at the

time supported racially exclusionary immigration policies within Canada through "prohibiting membership to certain ethnic groups… and encouraging deportation and social exclusion [of migrant workers]" (Foster 2014, p. 244, citing Calliste 1987 and Goutor 2007). Although immigration was seen by the labour movement as vital to growing the Canadian economy in the long run, racist notions of ideal immigrants persisted in the rhetoric promoted by the labour movement at the time (Goutor 2007, p. 146). By the 1930s, however, a new progressivism emerged in the union movement in Canada, leading to a less overt form of racism (Das Gupta 2016, 186). Despite the removal of racial discrimination in Canadian immigration policy and in the Canadian labour movement in the 1960s, the structures of unions remained predominantly White and male, with racism persisting even within unions that are predominantly comprised of racialized immigrant women such as the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) (Das Gupta 2016, pp. 187-9). Today, unions and labour more broadly have become friendlier towards migrant workers, as seen, for example, in terms of union attitudes in towards the influx of Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) in Canada more recently. A study from Foster et al. (2015) shows that despite some resistive actions towards TFWs from some unions in Canada, many others have had a facilitative and active role in integrating TFWs into the workplace and the union, and at times, advocating for increased rights for TFWs in reaction to the vulnerabilities they face at the hands of their employers (pp. 416-9). Although unions and the labour movement have progressed over time to become more racially inclusive, barriers still exist for racialized and migrant workers in terms of access to union membership. A 2016 study on unionization and income growth for racial minority immigrants in Canada found that "[recent] immigrants are less likely to be unionized than native-born whites, [with] visible minority status [having] an additional negative effect on the initial unionization rate of recent

immigrants" (Verma, Reitz, and Banerjee 2016, p. 693). Additionally, unionization produced limited benefits in terms of the initial income of recent immigrants belonging to visible minority groups (Verma, Reitz, and Banerjee 2016, p. 693). Focusing on the relationship between migrant workers and unions in the context of Luxembourg, Thomas (2016) calls into question the effectiveness of unions in terms of addressing the issues that migrant workers face. Citing Streeck (1992), Thomas (2016) recognizes that unions primarily depend on "domestic power resources deriving from their embeddedness in national institutions", leading to some limitations in terms of their ability to effectively address the precarious conditions faced by migrant workers, many of which have roots in the international context (p. 409). In spite of these possible limitations, unions have remained integral to advancing anti-racist movements within workplaces and in society more broadly, with the self-organizing of migrant workers filling a crucial role in fulfilling this imperative (Das Gupta 2006, p. 190). In particular, Das Gupta (2006) outlines that labour has had success in terms of influencing policy development and educational initiatives towards anti-racism and equity, and the advancement of anti-racism within civil society (p. 196). However, representation of workers of colour within leadership positions in the labour movement and within unions specifically remains an important issue of concern, considering that representation would "create a more effective and responsive labour movement" towards workers of colour (Das Gupta 2006, pp. 198–200). Thus, there has been a long, complicated history between unions and marginalized groups, including women, workers of color, and migrant workers. There is variation, however, in the incorporation and successes of each of these groups in terms of increasing representation within and from unions.

Beyond the role of migrant workers in advancing anti-racism within the unions that they belong to, they have also created broad campaigns and organizations advocating for migrant

workers' rights in Europe and in Canada, some of which are situated outside the union structure. Much of the literature consolidating the intersections of precarious work, migrant work, and labour movements emerges from the context of migrant rights issues in the context of Europe (Alberti, Holgate, and Tapia 2013; Fitzgerald and Hardy 2010; Heyes and Hyland 2012; Refslund 2021; A. Thomas 2016). Many of these studies focus on the variety of labour contexts specific to different countries belonging to the European Union. For example, Refslund (2021) examines the role of unions in including intra-European migrant workers and advocating for their rights as disproportionately precarious workers within collective bargaining institutions in the context of Denmark, wherein unions have become highly embedded institutionally compared to other contexts in Europe. Although Refslund (2021) focuses on intra-European labour migration, his insights on the possibility of unions advocating against the precarious working conditions that migrants disproportionately face remain valuable in terms of examining the case of Filipino migrant workers in Canada. In particular, he emphasizes the importance of building trust between unions and migrant workers, and how many unions dealing with migrant rights issues "[productively draw] upon traditional union organising tools such as union visibility and presence, highlighting past union gains and developing a dialogue with the workers" (Refslund 2021, p. 329). Other studies similarly study the strategies undertaken by trade unions in Europe in tackling issues specific to migrant workers, all of which call for the need for new, innovative approaches to increasing unionization and union participation for migrant workers (Alberti, Holgate, and Tapia 2013; Fitzgerald and Hardy 2010; Heyes and Hyland 2012; A. Thomas 2016). One key contribution emerges from Alberti et al. (2013) in employing an intersectional approach to examining the strategies employed by trade unions in the UK towards tackling the issue of precarious work among migrant workers. They found that trade unions in the UK employed a

‘universalistic’ approach (“based on a supposedly homogeneous worker identity”) to organizing migrant workers, leading to an inability to address issues that were specific to the interlocking oppressions that migrant workers are likely to face (Alberti, Holgate, and Tapia 2013, p. 4139). Instead, the study promotes the use of a ‘particularistic’ approach (wherein “migrants with specific social and workplace needs”) within trade union structures and bargaining, which would better acknowledge and address the specific needs of migrant workers related to their socioeconomic positionality (Alberti, Holgate, and Tapia 2013, 4145).

In the context of Canada, previous literature on migrant labour organizing have focused on initiatives undertaken within or outside union structures by migrant workers with temporary status, such as the Seasonal Agricultural Workers’ Program (SAWP), the Temporary Foreign Workers’ Program (TFWP), and the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP); the formation of workers’ centres focusing on migrant labour such as the Immigrant Workers’ Centre in Montreal; and the creation of national campaigns and coalitions to combat the precarious experiences of migrant workers in Canada (Choudry and Thomas 2012; 2013; Gardner, Magsumbol, and Tungohan 2021; Stasiulis and Bakan 2003b; Tungohan 2023). Although Filipino migrant workers have been active in many of these channels of organizing, a gap remains in the literature on Filipino migrant organizing on sectoral forms of organizing beyond care work and on labour organizing located within the structure of unions. Within the garment industry, migrant workers have long been organizing towards better working conditions in garment manufacturing factories found in urban centres such as Toronto and Winnipeg (Gannagé 1986; Giesbrecht 2010; Golz, Millar, and Roberts 1991; Hiebert 1993; Kessler-Harris 1976). Literature on labour participation within the garment industry within Canada and beyond observe that the ethnic composition of workers in the garment industry closely follows the ethnic composition of migrants at specific stages of time

due to the tendency of migrant workers to undertake "low-skilled" and underpaid work (Golz et al. 1991, p. 9; Green 1996, p. 424). These patterns are not only evident in the context of Canada, but also in the US, where many Hispanic workers are employed in the garment sector today and have organized themselves as well (Soldatenko 2002; Sullivan and Lee 2008; Whalen 2002). Within Canada in particular, studies have focused on the historical role of Jewish women within the garment industry, composing much of its labour force within the 20th century and propelling traditions of labour organizing in the sector (Giesbrecht 2010; Hiebert 1993; Kessler-Harris 1976). Another gap exists, however, in more recent accounts of labour organizing in the garment industry in the 21st century, which could incorporate current ethnic compositions of migrant labour within the sector and within understudied urban centres such as Winnipeg.

Feminist and Intersectional Political Economy Approaches to Studying Migrant Labour

In analyzing the intersecting phenomena of migrant work, precarious employment, and unionization through previous literature, it becomes evident that social locations of gender, race, and citizenship make a difference in the experiences of workers with each of these phenomena. Not only do gender, race, and citizenship make it more likely for migrant workers to engage in precarious work, unionization has also been shown to be a racialized and gendered process. Thus, studying the ways in which feminist and intersectional approaches have been applied to areas of precarious migrant work and unionization may clarify the connections between the social location of migrant workers and their economic conditions. Feminist analyses, which emphasize gendered dimensions in examining different phenomena, have been employed by previous literature on the experiences of women within unions (Ahmed and Hegewisch 2021; Bentham 2016; Crain 1991); on conceptualizations of precarious work and the precarious experiences of work for women in the garment sector (Gannagé 1986; Vosko 2010b); on macro

perspectives of immigration through the lens of social reproduction theory (Persaud 2003); and on studies of empowerment and gender justice (Kabeer 2012). Expanding upon feminist perspectives, intersectional approaches have been applied to the experiences of racialized and gendered workers within unions (J. Anderson, Beaton, and Laxer 2006; Alberti, Holgate, and Tapia 2013; Das Gupta 2006; 2016); the relationship between social location on precarious employment (Liu 2019; Cranford and Vosko 2006); and the relationship between social location and migration (Sharma 2019; Stasiulis and Bakan 2003b; Walia 2010).

Much of the literature employing feminist analyses examines the role of gender in shaping the experiences of women as migrant workers, union members, and/or precarious workers. For example, Bentham (2016) evaluates the extent to which unions have been able to address gendered issues such as those internal to the workplace, including "equitable pay, equal access to jobs, [and] eradication of sexual harassment", and those involving the broader, "non-work" socioeconomic conditions of women, including access to childcare (p. 106). Similar to other studies on gender and unionization (Ahmed and Hegewisch 2021; Crain 1991), Bentham (2016) critiques the gendered nature of the internal structure of unions and the extent to which gendered issues such as childcare could be addressed with these structures in place (p. 127). As shown through studies on women within unions, the non-work conditions of women cannot be divorced from their conditions of work precisely because of the obligation of domestic, unpaid labour disproportionately undertaken by women which often impacts their employment. Within Marxist feminist approaches, this unpaid labour is referred to as 'social reproduction', which calls attention to "[the] human labor [that] is at the heart of creating or reproducing society as a whole." (Bhattacharya 2017, p. 2) More specifically, social reproduction theory posits that labour power is reproduced through a process located outside the sphere of production within the

domestic sphere of the home which has historically been ascribed to women (Bhattacharya 2017, p. 2).

Analyzing the points of bargaining specific to women that both de Wolff (2006) and Bentham (2016) outlined through SRT, these demands materialize because women experience what has been referred to as a "double day": working in a paid sense within the sphere of production and in an unpaid sense in the home. In fact, Gannagé (1986) uses this term in discussing the experiences of women garment workers in Toronto within the 20th century, precisely to describe a complete account of the labour that women undertake within the garment industry and within their homes. Applying this concept to unions, de Wolff (2006) explores the ways in which unions have negotiated agreements which would allow workers to manage their paid employment and their unpaid care labour. Vosko (2010) also brings social reproduction into the conversation regarding the gendered nature of precarious work, wherein the gender contract involved in standard employment relationships (SER) was shaped by the division of labour between the domestic and public spheres in the post-war period. As women were ascribed to the home, the SER primarily became exclusive for male breadwinners, thus eventually creating the barriers to paid, stable employment that women continue to experience today (Vosko 2010, pp. 8–9). In terms of migrant work, Fraser (2017) applies a social reproduction framework to understanding global care chains and the role of migration in maintaining social reproduction. Examining the deficits of care work occurring in many developed economies today, wherein the necessity to work confronts working class women, she positions migrant work as a way to fill the needs of care within these economies (Fraser 2017, p. 34). Social reproduction has thus been used in a variety of ways to analyze the nature of work that women undertake within paid and unpaid positions as migrant workers.

Intersectionality builds upon feminist approaches through integrating the idea of social location as a determinant of economic conditions, encompassing factors such as race, ethnicity, and citizenship. Built on the basis of Black feminist literature and critical race theory on interlocking forms of racial and gender oppressions, including Crenshaw's (1991) foundational study on violence against women of color and Hill Collins' (1991) contributions to Black feminist thought, intersectionality describes the process in which experiences and conditions are influenced by 'intersecting' axes of social locations such as race, gender, and citizenship (Crenshaw 1991, p. 1242; Liu 2019, p. 172). McNally (2017) critiques and builds upon this idea of intersecting oppressions in understanding that these social locations intermesh and at times co-constitute one another, but nevertheless remains ontologically distinct from one another (pp. 96-97). Within political economy, two distinct approaches have been developed by Folbre (2020) and Fraser (2022a) to integrate intersectional approaches to understanding socioeconomic reality. Folbre (2020) expands upon the idea of exploitation as a process beyond the sphere of production through developing a framework of bargaining wherein social locations impact the bargaining power of individuals, who are thus understood as being exploited (pp. 461-462). Fraser (2022) situates intersectionality in terms of processes of expropriation enabled by social categories which facilitate processes of exploitation (pp. 14-5). Expropriation is distinct from exploitation, and is defined as a "mechanism of accumulation" through "the forcible seizure, on a continuing basis, of the wealth of subjugated and minoritized peoples" (Fraser 2022, pp. 7-14). Moreover, expropriation makes the conditions of exploitation possible, and corresponds to a status hierarchy: "exploitable "workers" are accorded the status of rights-bearing individuals and citizens; entitled to state protection… expropriable "others" are… stripped of political protection" (Fraser 2022, p. 15). This nexus is dependent upon changing configurations of

racialization and citizenship. Thus, intersectionality has been utilized in different ways within political economy literature.

Previous studies in migration, precarious work, and unionization have applied an understanding of intersectionality to examine the lived realities of precarious and/or migrant workers, many of whom are women of colour. Intersectional approaches have specifically been utilized in developing an understanding of issues facing racialized and gendered migrant workers (Liu 2019; Stasiulis 2020; Stasiulis and Bakan 2003b; Walia 2010), and in understanding the gendered and racialized nature of unions (J. Anderson et al. 2006; Alberti, Holgate, and Tapia 2013; Das Gupta 2006; 2016; Gardner, Magsumbol, and Tungohan 2021). The social category of citizenship takes center stage in intersectional understandings of migrant work as citizenship status delineates access to welfare programs and workers' protections commonly provisioned to domestic workers. This question of welfare is especially important within the idea of social reproduction, where welfare programs from the state aid in reproducing labour power as a mechanism for the provision of social reproduction (Cantillon et al. 2023). Focusing on racialization through an intersectional approach, Stasiulis builds on understanding the role of citizenship and immigration policy in restricting worker access to welfare, which helps maintain a pool of disposable, precarious migrant labour (Stasiulis 2020). Walia (2021) expands upon this idea through examining the instrumentality of borders in maintaining global divisions among developed and developing economies, which directly impacts the experiences of migrants and refugees across the globe. Focusing on the Canadian context, Stasiulis and Bakan (2003b) have used the term 'negotiated citizenship' to define the processes of negotiation and advocacy undergone by racialized migrant women in Canada with the aim of improving precarious forms of citizenship and livelihoods for migrant workers (p. 4). Liu (2019) puts these ideas of

citizenship into conversation with Vosko's (2010) conceptualizations of precarious work in developing an understanding how citizenship also shapes the precarious nature of employment that migrant workers in Canada undertake. Closely related to studies on precarious migrant work, studies on unions have also used intersectional approaches to capture the experiences of racialized and gendered workers within unionization processes and union structures. Examining the relationship between unionization on precarious work, Anderson et al. (2006) found that race and gender play a role in determining the likelihood that workers are covered by a collective agreement and experience precarious conditions in terms of income and employment. Focusing on internal union dynamics, Das Gupta (2006; 2016) emphasizes the persistence of racism within unions and the labour movement, along with the challenges that racialized workers have faced in terms of achieving equitable representation and employment equity along racial lines. Previous studies on unionization and labour movements have thus emphasized the need to consider the intersectional approaches to representing racialized and gendered workers due to the distinct ways in which social categories impact their lived experiences (Alberti et al. 2013; Gardner et al. 2021).

Gaps to Address in the Literature

In surveying previous literature on migration, precarious work, and unionization, it is clear that there are several gaps that exist within the broad purview of previous studies at the nexus of these three intersecting phenomenon. This research project aims to contribute to the literature through filling the following gaps. Many studies on precarious migrant work in the Canadian context have focused on specific sectors wherein there is a concentration of precarious migrant workers through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) and the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP), such as the agricultural sector and the care sector. A case study

approach to the unionizing struggles of precarious migrant labour through the Canada Goose Workers' Union therefore extends this account of the precarious employment of migrant workers today beyond the commonly highlighted sectors of care and agriculture. Second, the study furthers the connections made between reproduction and migrant work through applying feminist and intersectional approaches in political economy to the experiences of Filipino immigrant women working in a sector that is otherwise not directly related to care labour, but remains affected by it through their need to reproduce as labour. Although previous studies have shown that race and gender continue to play a role in precarity and in unionization, a case study approach would build upon this literature through focusing on a specific racialized group of migrant women (i.e., Filipino immigrant women) whose precarity as racialized and gendered workers within the private sector would have tended towards non-unionization, but have otherwise prevailed in their unionizing struggle. The study would also lend to a long, documented history of immigrant women organizing in the garment industry in Winnipeg and beyond through a more recent account of what it has meant for immigrant women to unionize.

Methodology

Theoretical Foundations

To understand the experiences of precarious employment by racialized and gendered migrant workers in Winnipeg's garment industry, it is important to establish the theoretical basis upon which this project draws. This research is grounded in a feminist political economy (FPE) approach, which allows for an understanding of the intersecting ways in which social locations such as gender, race, and citizenship shape the conditions of work and life of immigrant women.

Marxist Political Economy on Labour and Unions

Much of the theoretical foundations of this project stem directly from or as a critique of Marxist political economy, specifically because of its theoretical development of the labour process and the labour theory of value (LTV). Marx (1992) defines labour as "a process by which man, through his actions, mediates, regulates and controls the metabolism between himself and nature" (p. 283). Within Marxist political economy, labour is central to understanding the process of production and accumulation of surplus value within the capitalist system. The labour theory of value (LTV) poses that within capitalism, workers produce and embed value into commodities within the production process for capitalists by exchanging their labour-power for a wage. Here, an understanding of the circuit of capital becomes fundamental, wherein M – C{LP, MP}…(P)…C'-M' (Basu 2021, p. 103). Within this process, an initial sum of money (M) is exchanged for commodities in the form of labour-power (LP) and means of production (MP) (i.e., commodities used as inputs into the production process). These commodities are then used within the process of production (P) through which a new commodity (C') is created. It is important to note that the value of the new commodity (C') can exceed the value of the initial bundle of commodities (C) used for production, whereby surplus value exists when "the end

result has more value than the value of the inputs used up" (Basu 2021, p. 106). The commodities produced (C') are then exchanged in the market for more money (M'). Through a process referred to as *valorization*, surplus value thus originates from the value embedded into the initial bundle of commodities to create a new commodity within the production process. The valorization process is made possible through labour-power (i.e., "the human capacity to work"), which imbues value into the inputs used in production (Basu 2021, p. 106). Therefore, the labour theory of value (LTV) describes how labour-power is essential to the production and accumulation of surplus value and profits within capitalism.

An investigation of the circuit of capital also makes clear the dialectical nature of the capital-labour relation, specifically through the wage exchanged between the capitalist and the worker. Within capitalism, workers sell their labour-power in the market to capitalists in need of labour-power in exchange for a wage. The wage emerges within the production process as a cost to capitalists in the form of variable capital, alongside the means of production (e.g., input goods, machinery) which is considered as constant capital (Basu 2021, pp. 116–17). Basu (2021) follows Foley (1982) in conceptualizing that the value of labour-power, as reflected in the wage rate, is defined by the ratio between the money wage rate and the monetary expression of value, which considers the role of labour productivity in the historical, cultural, and political processes which determine the wage (pp. 112-115). Particularly, the value of the new commodity (C') exceeds the combined value of labour-power and the means of production, creating a surplus value through the process of exploitation inherent within the production process. Thus, within Marxist political economy, the wage is often a site of conflict between the capitalist and the worker due to each party's conflicting interests (Basu 2021, p. 34). In order to maximize profits, capitalists must increase surplus value through minimizing the costs of production, including the

wage, or through intensifying the production process. However, working-class interests generally oppose these tactics as they seek to increase the wage and de-intensify the production process through possessing more control over their working conditions. Despite the opposition of capital and labour interests, both parties remain dependent on one another, thus comprising the dialectical nature of the capitalist system. Central to this class struggle is the process of exploitation, which is defined through three principles: the *inverse interdependence of welfare principle*, whereby an improvement of the welfare of capitalists is dependent on a decline in the welfare of workers; the *labour appropriation principle*, wherein the inverse interdependence of welfare emerges because of the ability of capitalists to appropriate the labour workers; and the *exclusion principle*, wherein labour appropriation can occur because capitalists can exclude workers from accessing the means of production through private ownership (Basu 2021, p. 374, citing Wright 2000). Within Marxist political economy, class and class struggle are therefore central determinants in shaping the processes of production, distribution, and accumulation within the capitalist system.

Central to this struggle between capitalists and workers is the role that unions play in representing workers' interests, which is reflected in Marx and Engels' engagements with labour movements which developed their analysis of trade unions (La Botz 2013). Hyman (1971) explores Marxist contributions to the role of trade unions within capitalism. He identifies that within Marx's analysis, unions help determine the wage because of their ability to represent workers, stating that "[in] the absence of union organisation, the capitalist would cut wages during economic recessions even more severely than actually occurred…" (Hyman 1971, p. 5). Moreover, "[in] the longer run, collective action [would impose] some constraint on capitalist encroachments on the conditions of labour" (Hyman 1971, p. 5). However, this ability of unions

to influence the wage is constrained by fluctuations in the business cycle, especially as recessions limit labour power (La Botz 2013, p. 36). Although Marx and Engels agree on the limited *economic* power of unions, they recognize the *political* potential of unions to improve working-class solidarity as it abolishes the competition between workers that functions as the basis of capitalist dominance (Dridzo 1976, p. 16; Hyman 1971, p. 6, citing Engels 1892; La Botz 2013, pp. 14-16). Beyond the influential role of unions on the wage, Marx also acknowledged the potential of unions in "transforming [workers] from a class 'in itself' to a class '*for* itself'"(Hyman 1971, pp. 6–7). What this means is that through union organization, workers can become more than a social class and organize for its own interests. Despite these optimistic visions of unions, Marx and Engels' perspective on unions developed over time to the view that unions were only a minority within the working class limited to workers who were privileged enough to "achieve material concessions… unattainable by workers generally" (Hyman 1971, p. 9, citing Collins and Abramsky 1965). To an extent, Marx and Engels reckoned with the disparities within the working class in Britain and between the working-class in the Global North and in the Global South, specifically due to Britain's place in the global economy, both of which result in an "embourgoisement of the… working class" and impedes national and global working-class solidarity (Hyman 1971, pp. 9–10; La Botz 2013, pp. 17–18). Moreover, orthodox Marxists have also recognized that the concessions that unions achieve may impede the growth of revolutionary consciousness within the working class (Hyman 1971, p. 50). Despite these limitations, it is clear that within Marxist perspectives, unions hold the potential to change the dynamics of exploitation and power within the workplace through its ability to unite workers' interests (Dridzo 1976, p. 15; Hyman 1971, p. 38).

Feminist and Post-Colonial Critiques of Marxism

In spite of the advancements made in the analysis of labour within capitalism through Marxist political economy, several critiques have emerged on various fronts about the lack of international, racial, and gender dynamics within Marx's analysis of capitalism. Postcolonial theorists and Marxist historical sociologists have previously characterized and dismissed Marx on the grounds of Eurocentrism and Orientalism as they view that his analyses, particularly within his early writings on India and China, ignore the experiences of colonized subjects under imperialism (Anderson 2010, p. 17, citing Said 1978; Lindner 2022, p. 2, citing Castro Varela and Dhawan 2005; Pradella 2017, p. 147, citing Arrighi 2007 and Frank 1998) . In Marx's essays on India in the early 1850s, he viewed British colonialism as both destructive and regenerative, wherein colonialism simultaneously destroys and creates the material basis of Indian society (Lindner 2022, p. 6). Lindner (2022) argues that these writings reflect a Eurocentric view from Marx as it "[treats] Europe as a society with a superior technology, infrastructure, legal system and so on" (p. 6). However, these perspectives seem to shift later in life as reflected in his later writings, which rejects the superiority of England over India and recognizes the complex conditions within India (Lindner 2022, p. 24). Pradella (2017) and Anderson (2010) also explore Marx's later writings which break from Eurocentric notions of colonialism by examining his later writings on the conditions in non-Western societies such as India, China, and Indonesia, where he elaborates on the relationship between imperialism and capitalism. Extending Marx's analysis of capitalism to questions of racial imperialism, dependency theorists have advanced the connections between imperialism and capitalism by theorizing that capital within the Global North is dependent upon the subsumption and dispossession of Global South economies (Baran 1957; Emmanuel 1972; Gunder Frank 1978).

A substantial critique of Marx has also emerged from feminist traditions which point to the gender-blindness of Marx's critique of capitalism (Rao and Akram-Lodhi 2021, 36; Stevano, Cantillon, and Mackett 2023, 16). Becchio (2018) identifies that this absence stems from the fact that women are not a class as defined in Marxist terms (p. 13). Marxist political economy has traditionally adopted what Pearson (2014) refers to as the Engelian fallacy, wherein "gender discrimination would be automatically dissolved when women were incorporated into the labour force, to be exploited by capital on the same basis as men" (p. 31). Similar to neoclassical economics, this view overlooks the disparity in work that exists along gender lines due to the invisible labour of care that women often undertake (Esquivel 2020, p. 266). In engaging in paid work, women thus experience a 'double burden' where work extends to the realm of the home in an unpaid, invisible manner through care work (Pearson 2014, p. 31). Marx was not able to delve into these gendered processes which are central to the regeneration of labour power in capitalism, leading to an inability within Marxist analysis to examine the gender division of labour in the home (Rao and Akram-Lodhi 2021, p. 36, citing Molyneux 1979). Beyond care labour, feminist theorists have also extended Marx's analysis of capitalism to include the fundamental role that patriarchal institutions play in enabling accumulation to occur. Central to this development is the work of Federici (2004) and Mies (1998) in conceptualizing the role of patriarchy in supporting the primary conditions of accumulation within Britain and on a global scale through the destruction of the commons. Gender also comes into play through global dynamics which reproduce labour through processes such as immigration, whereby increasing labour demand in sectors such as care, service, and manufacturing have led to a feminization of migrant work (Fraser 2017; Vogel 2013, 145) This gap within gender-based analyses in Marxist

political economy, along with the role of gender within the capitalist system, is precisely what feminist political economy (FPE) attempts to rectify.

Feminist Political Economy as a Theoretical Basis

Developed as a critique to the gender blindness of both neoclassical economics and orthodox Marxist political economy, FPE reconciles the concepts of class and gender, which are theorized to have a mutually constitutive relationship (Rao and Akram-Lodhi 2021, p. 34). FPE brings the question of gender to the foundational questions of political economy on ownership, distribution of labour and resources, and societal change (Stevano et al. 2023, p. 14, citing Bernstein 2010). Within Canada, FPE developed out of the traditions of new Canadian political economy and feminism in both its liberal and socialist currents. In conjunction with this, the feminist movement in Canada, as formed by the history of systemic exclusion within the state, also had a role in shaping these developments in the field (Luxton 2006, p. 12). Because of its roots in socialist feminism, FPE remains rooted in a focus on working women's conditions including not only their labour market conditions, but also the conditions of care which occur in non-market settings such as the home and the community.

FPE has been instrumental in bringing in processes of care and life-making to analyses of capitalism within political economy through questioning the processes which reproduce labour power at the end of the working day, which are taken as a given within orthodox Marxist political economy (Rao and Akram-Lodhi 2021, p. 36; Stevano et al. 2023, p. 16). Referred to as social reproduction (SR), these processes include "(i) the daily sustenance of the workers; (ii) the intergenerational reproduction of the labor force… and (iii) the work involved in transmitting the norms, culture, and skills required to reproduce workers as a class" (Rao and Akram-Lodhi 2021, p. 36, citing Benería 1979). Extending SR into a Marxist frame of analysis, social reproduction

theory (SRT) emphasizes that these social reproduction processes, especially the unpaid care labour that women often undertake within the domestic sphere, are central to enabling production and accumulation within the capitalist system through the reproduction of labour power (Bhattacharya 2017, p. 2). Pearson (2014) argues that "the wage never covered the full cost of the reproduction of labour, but merely some or all of the associated commodity costs", and that women's reproductive labour was fundamental to transforming the commodities bought through the wage into use values which then replenish labour power (p. 32). Following this line of thinking, Naidu (2023) de-centres Marx's circuit of capital to instead conceptualize a circuit of social reproduction (Fig. 6) centred on consumption, which allows for an analysis of the "multiple spaces of struggle" involved with the reproduction of labour power (p. 101). At the centre of this circuit is A_c, which encompasses the consumption goods used to sustain workers (Naidu 2023, p. 99). Various labours of social reproduction occurring both within and outside the market thus contribute to regenerating labour power, which is fundamental to the continuation of capitalist production. Figure 8 shows this through illustrating two concentric spheres. The sphere on the outside outlines the labour processes which contribute to A_c that occur outside of the market, including non-waged labour ($L_d + L_h$), the state and other institutions, and non-capitalist commodity production done for subsistence (C_{nl}). Unlike the process outlined in the inner sphere, these processes occur in isolation to one another, but are nevertheless connected as contributors to the bundle of goods necessary for reproduction to take place. Denoting a transformative process, the inner sphere encompasses the labour process which replenish labour power occurring within the market: labour power L_p is exchanged for a wage V, which is then used by workers to purchase goods used for the reproduction of their labour power. SRT as a methodology thus expands the realm of analysis within political economy to include sites,

institutions, and processes of social reproduction which replenish labour, such as the family, community, and the state.

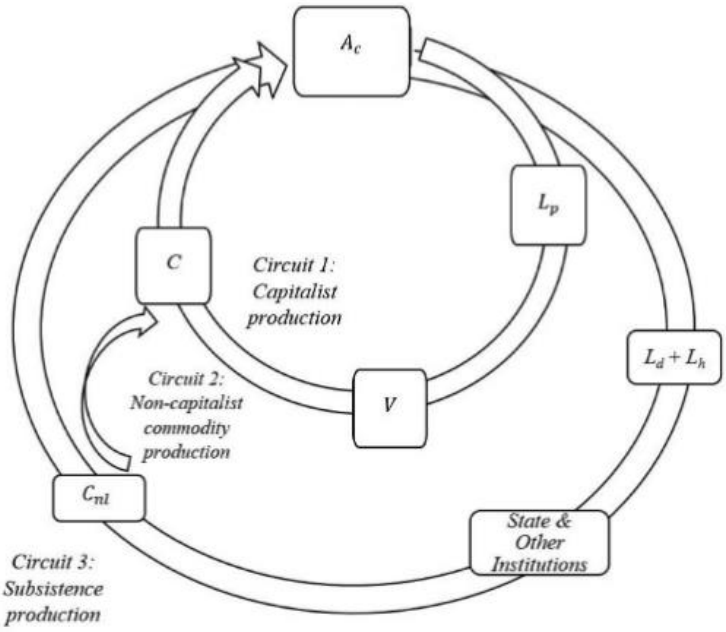

Figure 8: Labours of social reproduction (Naidu 2023, p. 101)

Both SRT and FPE are concerned with understanding how social locations, such as gender, race, and citizenship, intersect and are fundamental to capitalism (Bhattacharya 2017, p. 14; Rao and Akram-Lodhi 2021, p. 38; Cantillon et al. 2023, p. 16). These analyses draw from the work of intersectional scholars, especially Black feminist scholars, who developed the concept of intersectionality to show how these social locations intersect and interact to form the material conditions of individuals (Crenshaw 1991; Davis 1983; Hill Collins 1991). Integrating intersectionality within the political economy tradition, Fraser (2022) conceptualizes that social categories are key determinants in the nexus of expropriation and exploitation (pp. 14-5). Exploitation within Marxist economic theory is unique to the capital-labour relation and describes the ways in which the labour power of workers are appropriated to extract surplus value (Basu 2021, pp. 374-5). Social locations come into play through expropriation, which

describes accumulation that occurs through "the forcible seizure…of the wealth of… minoritized peoples" (Fraser 2022, pp. 7-14). Expropriation enables exploitation by delineating the access that workers have over rights and protections, with exploited workers having access through their citizenship while expropriated workers do not (Fraser 2022, p. 15). Folbre (2020) takes a different approach in connecting intersectionality to political economy, and instead theorizes that social locations affect the distribution of resources in the economy through affecting the bargaining power that each group has. Despite the differences in Fraser and Folbre's analysis of intersectionality within political economy, both reveal the central role that social locations such as gender, race, and class play in shaping the conditions of workers.

Combining approaches which highlight intersectionality and SRT reveals how social locations influence the conditions of work and life of racialized and gendered migrant workers within the capitalist system. Central to these conditions is the idea of citizenship, which "includes the legal recognition on the part of states to allocate certain rights and responsibilities among a given population that are defined as having membership in… a particular nation-state collectivity" (Stasiulis and Bakan 2003, p. 2). Citing Anderson (1991), Sharma (2019) notes that the nation-state "crucially depends on differentiated categories of national belonging and not-belonging" (p. 62). These methods of differentiation are enshrined in various citizenship statuses which determine the access of each worker to rights and protections (Sharma 2019, p. 62). Social categories such as race and gender play a role in determining the tendency in which individuals hold more precarious forms of citizenship (Stasiulis and Bakan 2003, p. 141). Citizenship plays a role in labour segmentation: some could be exploited as a worker who holds rights tied to formal citizenship, while others could be expropriated on the bases of precarious forms of citizenship (Fraser 2022, pp. 37-8; Persaud 2003, p. 130; Sharma 2019, p. 63). Along with race and gender,

citizenship thus comes to determine the access that migrant workers have towards resources and mechanisms used in the reproduction of their labour power, especially within the Global North, where welfare states (as contingent upon citizenship) publicly provision social reproduction (through education, healthcare, and insurance) to an extent, and confers rights for labour which assist social reproduction (i.e., right to association, overtime rules, maternity leave) (Bezanson 2006, p. 30; Fraser 2017, p. 29). The intersections of these social locations also influence the likelihood that workers have historically engaged in precarious employment (i.e., work that deviates away from the SER), and their methods of recourse such as through unionization (J. Anderson et al. 2006; B. Anderson 2010; Cranford and Vosko 2006; Vosko 2009). However, these methods of recourse are complicated by social location through the exclusionary history of unions and the labour movement in Canada, which has previously discriminated against workers on the lines of gender, race, and migrant status (Ahmed and Hegewisch 2021; Das Gupta 2016; Foster 2014; Luxton 2001).

Through an exploration of feminist political economy, it thus becomes clear that social locations such as gender, race, and citizenship are foundational to understanding both the productive and reproductive conditions of workers. This theoretical basis allows for an analysis of the conditions of work and life where each informs the other: not only does employment determine the level at which workers can access the commodities needed for social reproduction; the reproductive labour that women experience come to shape their engagements with the labour market.

Social Reproduction in the Neoliberal Era

These interconnections are laid bare within the neoliberal era, which on one hand necessitates a flexible, mobile labour force (enabled in part through labour migration), but also

depends upon households to undertake increasing burdens of care in the absence of public provisioning (Bakker 2003, pp. 68–69; Bezanson 2006, pp. 28–30; Kunz 2010, p. 914). Exploring the new conditions of production that women face during the neoliberal era, Pearson (2014) uses the concept of the "reproductive bargain" to encompass the "different institutions, ideologies, and identities" which directly influence the social reproductive processes of workers (Pearson 2014, p. 35, citing Gottfried 2013). The reproductive bargain was conceptualized in the context of neoliberal structural adjustment in Cuba, where "wages remained frozen, whilst the range of services and entitlements available to the Cuban workers and families shrank dramatically" (Pearson 2014, p. 35). Informed by the absence of socially provisioned social reproductive services from the state under neoliberalism, especially for migrant workers with limited access to these protections through their citizenship status, the reproductive bargain allows for an understanding of the labours and processes undertaken by workers to fill these gaps in reproduction and care in today's context.

Applying FPE to the Case of Filipino Immigrant Women in Canada Goose

Through its integration of reproduction and social location within Marxist analyses of capitalism, FPE and SRT therefore advance our understanding of the myriads of institutions, processes, and identities which mold the material conditions of production and reproduction for racialized and gendered migrant workers. This project uses this theoretical framework to understand the conditions of work and life of Filipino immigrant women working in Canada Goose in Winnipeg. Specifically, it investigates the role that unions play within the reproductive bargain of racialized and gendered migrant workers within Canada through their ability to negotiate their working conditions. To examine the role of unions in the reproductive bargain of racialized and gendered migrant workers, this project employs a case-study approach to the

experiences of Filipino immigrant women working in Canada Goose, which is situated within Winnipeg's historic garment industry. Feminist political economy (FPE) is brought forward as an analytical approach because of its ability to question how gender, race, and citizenship as markers of identity interplay with other institutions (such as unions) to shape the productive and reproductive experiences of women workers.

FPE not only functions as a theoretical basis, but also informs the methods of enquiry within this research. Because of its focus on the experiences of working women, FPE generally encourages mixed methods and qualitative techniques to explore the lived experiences of a variety of populations. Citing Okech (2020), Mezzadri et al. (2022) acknowledge that research within FPE is "deeply implicated in the world inequalities it seeks to understand", thus necessitating productive collaborations through participatory and community-based methods with the participants of the study (p. 1793). Following FPE, this project thus uses a community-based research (CBR) approach wherein the community (in the form of Workers United Canada Council and Canada Goose Union) helps shape the project in all its stages.

Research Design

Rooted in a feminist political economy approach, I aim to examine the intersecting phenomena of precarity, migration and gender through a case study of the Canada Goose Workers' Union in Winnipeg. In particular, I seek to document the effects of unionization as a community-based intervention against the disproportionate experiences of precarious employment by Filipino women as migrant workers within the context of Manitoba. This study is contextualized within the history of Filipino migrant workers in Canada, which has been predominantly composed of women (McElhinny et al. 2012, p. 11). Because this project is theoretically grounded in the historical materialist tradition extended by FPE, the history of

Filipino migrant workers in Canada is essential to understanding the material realities of Filipino migrant workers, including those working in the garment industry in Winnipeg.

To do so, I employ a community-based research approach in collaboration with Workers United Canada. Community-based research is an "orientation to research that seeks to create an environment of shared authority among communities and stakeholders that encompasses the entire research process" (Vaughn et al. 2017, p. 1457). Citing Israel et al. (2005), Vaughn and peers highlight three tenets of community-based approaches, including "equitably involving the target community in all phases of research…; building the capacity of the local community to address issues that affect them…; and conducting research that results in action that directly improves community well-being" (pp. 1457-8). Central to this approach is the development of trust between the community and the researcher. Following feminist methods of enquiry, CBR was chosen as a methodology to reconcile the imbalance in power relations between the researcher and the researched, especially because this project engages with workers whose experiences have been marginalized due to their identities.

Following these guidelines, I conducted 13 semi-structured interviews with union leadership and union members within the Canada Goose Union with three objectives in mind:

a) to document their unionization process, including the conditions which led the workers to initiate a union drive, and to eventually vote to unionize under Workers United Canada Council;
b) to understand whether unionization has made a difference to the working and living conditions of Filipino immigrant women currently working or who formerly worked in any of the two existing Canada Goose factories in Winnipeg; and

c) to identify any improvements that can be made to the union in terms of its ability to contribute to the working conditions of racialized and gendered workers based on the experiences of Filipino women workers.

Data Collection

After the study's ethics protocol was approved by the University of Manitoba's Research Ethics Board in October 2024, participants were recruited with the assistance of Workers United Canada Council and of Canada Goose Union, who aided in disseminating a call for participants through an information sheet sent to workers at Canada Goose (Appendix A) and through secondary efforts by providing the contact information of eligible participants. To minimize bias that may arise through secondary efforts in recruiting workers by the union, the identity of workers who were contacted and who actually participated in interviews were kept confidential to the union. Participants were then contacted to schedule the interviews and to obtain their informed consent before the interview through a consent form (Appendix B). 13 participants were successfully recruited: a total of 8 union leaders and/or representatives were interviewed, along with 10 current or former union members who identify as Filipino and as women. 10 participants satisfied both these eligibility conditions for participants. All participants received a similar set of 15 questions, which asked them about their lived experiences as immigrants; the unionizing struggle of Canada Goose workers to document this process; and their working and living conditions as a worker within Canada Goose, along with insights about the union. Participation in interviews was voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time during the research process. A cash honorarium worth $30 was given to participants for their time participating in the study. Each interview approximately took under one hour; some of which were done in-person and some through Zoom. Participants had the option to be

interviewed or respond in Tagalog or English. Audio from interviews were recorded via a mobile phone or Zoom Cloud recording to aid in transcription. Interviews occurred from November 2024 to April 2025.

To contextualize the phenomenon of feminized precarious migrant work prevalent within the neoliberal era, the study makes use of secondary quantitative data on employment and migration within Manitoba, Canada, and from the Philippines. Data from the Government of Manitoba, Statistics Canada, and the Philippine Statistics Authority were also used, including but not limited to existing datasets focusing on unionization, migration, and labour statistics of the Filipino population in Canada. Additionally, records and reports from Workers United Canada Council pertaining to the Canada Goose Workers' Union, including their collective agreement from 2022, were used to fully document their unionization process.

Interview questions were created to account for the objectives outlined above, and to account for the demographic characteristics of participants (e.g., what their relationship has been to Canada Goose and Workers United Canada Council, etc.). Specifically, 15 questions were asked to participants (Appendix C). The first question explores the participants' backgrounds as immigrant workers, specifically asking about when and how (i.e., immigration pathway) participants migrated to Canada and what kinds of employment experiences they held prior to and after migrating to Canada. The intention of this question is to investigate whether precarious work persists at all stages of the migration process (i.e., before and after), or is a by-product of migration for the participants in this project. The next few questions ask participants about their experiences in Canada Goose, including the nature of their employment (i.e., position, length of employment, part-time or full-time) and the extent of their involvement with the union. Participants were then asked to recall what the conditions were like at Canada Goose prior to the

union being formed, and if they were involved in organizing the union, to narrate their experiences during the union drive at Canada Goose. The last set of the questions explore the impact of the union on the precarious employment conditions generally observed in the garment industry. This project makes use of Cranford and Vosko's (2006) operationalization of precarious employment, which determines several key dimensions of precarious work at the individual level: earnings, social wage, regulatory protection and control, and contingency.

Dimensions of Precarious Work

(a) *Earnings.* Cranford and Vosko (2006) begins with the dimension of income, which includes the earnings that an individual gains from wage labour. They consider four indicators of precarious work through earnings to encompass various ways in which income contributes to precarity. They first consider those receiving less or equivalent to the minimum wage (currently set at $15.80 in Manitoba); however, they recognize that those earning the minimum wage may fall below the poverty line (Cranford and Vosko 2006, p. 49). This is especially true in Manitoba, where previous studies have set the living wage in Manitoba at $18.75, which is $2.95 more than the current minimum wage rate (Harney et al. 2024, p. 6). A second measure of precarious earnings "includes all those who earn less than $10 an hour," which is " consistent with the poverty line defined by the Low Income Cut Off for an individual in a large city working 35 hours a week, year round" and is commonly used in community union campaigns (Cranford and Vosko 2006, p. 49). Because not all workers work for 35 hours per week, a third measure is included, which is the median industrial wage at $14.13 used by trade unions. Lastly, their analysis also included yearly earnings, whereby a worker is considered engaging in precarious work if they earn less than

$20,000 a year, including both full-time and part-time workers. To understand the impact of the union on this dimension, workers were asked whether or not they have seen any differences in pay or wages because the union was formed.

(b) *Social Wage*. The social wage is defined as "the bundle of elements beyond earnings", which is deemed impactful in "the standards of living of individuals and households" and "the relations of distributions within households" (Cranford and Vosko 2006, p. 49, citing Picchio (1998)). A portion of the social wage includes the benefits that workers receive through their employment, including pension, health and dental coverage, and vacation or leave entitlements. Similar to the previous dimension, workers were asked to identify any differences in the benefits they receive as a part of their employment in Canada Goose because of the union.

(c) *Regulatory Protection and Control*. The dimensions of regulatory protection and control encompass the degree in which workers are able to influence or shape their working conditions. Regulatory protection involves whether a workplace is represented by a union and is covered by a collective agreement, as well as the broader policy context with regards to unionization within a given setting. On the other hand, control measures the degree to which workers are able to change or influence the labour process. Within this case, regulatory protection was not included in the questions asked to workers, given that a union has already been formed, and a collective agreement has already been negotiated at Canada Goose. Firm size, which plays a role in this dimension, was also not included in this question. The question on this dimension thus focused on the variable of control, thus asking the workers if they

feel that they are able to change or influence their working conditions because of the union.

(d) *Contingency*. Lastly, contingency involves the permanence or tenure (or conversely, the temporariness) of work. Cranford and Vosko (2006) measures this through three indicators, including having less than 12 months of job tenure, being in an out of work, and company uncertainty (p. 52). Within this project, workers were generally questioned whether the union has had an impact on their perceived job security at Canada Goose.

These dimensions thus inform a comprehensive account of the degree of precarious work currently experienced by Filipino immigrant women working at Canada Goose. The responses of participants were triangulated through news articles, reports, and other documents including the current collective agreement of the union, and were contextualized by the social locations held by participants as well as their occupational context within the Winnipeg garment industry.

Data Analysis

In terms of data analysis, transcribed interview data, as contextualized by secondary quantitative data, was organized to answer the three objectives identified. Two sets of results emerged from this exercise: (a) an account of the unionizing struggles of the Canada Goose Workers' Union, as documented through news articles and first-hand accounts from union leaders and members; and (b) an evaluation of the union according to the experiences of Filipino immigrant women who formerly worked or are currently working at Canada Goose factories in Winnipeg after the union was formed. Through the use of Excel, data included in the evaluation of the union underwent coding to identify key themes in terms of the experiences of Filipino immigrant women working under and alongside the union. Following feminist and intersectional

approaches in political economy, an emphasis will be placed on identifying the effects of unionization on both the productive and reproductive capacities of Filipino immigrant women workers, who are more likely to experience precarious employment. Productive capacities constitute the working conditions of Filipino immigrant women within Canada Goose, while reproductive capacities capture both the living conditions of workers (e.g., the effects of wages and the ability of workers to sustain themselves through this wage) and the possibilities of community formation and mobilization fostered through unionization. Emerging from intersectional approaches, the effects of gender, race, and citizenship will be considered when discussing the experiences of Filipino immigrant women working under Canada Goose along with their experiences with the union. In doing so, a holistic evaluation of the union, which accounts for indicators of precarity beyond employment, can be made in pursuit of improving its ability to serve the needs of its members, particularly those who are racialized and gendered.

Results and Discussion

Results

Character of Interview Participants

A total of 13 participants were interviewed as a part of this project. All of the participants were immigrant women who have experienced working in one or more of the three Canada Goose facilities in Winnipeg and were affiliated with the union as members. 3 of the interview participants were non-Filipino immigrant women who have experienced being a union representative within Canada Goose. 5 of the participants were Filipino women and satisfied both of the eligibility requirements of the project as shop stewards and as workers involved in CGU. Lastly, 5 of the participants were Filipino immigrant women working in Canada Goose as union members but have no experience as shop stewards.

Lived Experiences as Immigrant Workers in Winnipeg

Table 3: Summary of Characteristics of Interview Participants

Character of Interview Participants		# of Participants
Length of Stay in Canada	Less than 5 years	2
	More than 5 years	3
	More than 10 years	3
	More than 15 years	3
	More than 20 years	2
Immigration Pathway	Work Visa	1
	Student Visa	2
	Recruited for garment work	2
	Sponsored by family member	8
Pre-Immigration Work Experiences*	Working in the garment industry	2
	Self-employed	3
	Worked in low-wage positions (e.g., service, manufacturing, retail)	3
	Worked in professional occupations (e.g.,	5

	teaching, public service)	
Post-Immigration Work Experiences*	Worked in non-garment manufacturing facilities	2
	Worked in Canada Goose as First Job	3
	Worked in other garment manufacturing facilities	3
	Service work in food establishments and grocery store chains	3
	Other service work (e.g., cleaning)	1

**These categories are not mutually exclusive, with some participants sharing multiple work experiences in different categories.*

As immigrant workers, participants differed in terms of their length of stay in Canada and the pathways that they had followed in their migration journeys. In terms of the length in which they have lived and worked in Canada, there was a wide variation in participant experiences (Table 3): while two of the participants can be considered as newcomers (less than 5 years in Canada), two other participants have lived and worked in the country for more than 20 years. Notably, all participants who were Filipino women had stayed in Canada for more than 5 years. In terms of immigration pathways, majority of the participants (N=8) were sponsored as landed immigrants through family members and had migrated to Canada with their families. Three of the participants came to Canada through student or work visas. Lastly, two of the participants were recruited in the Philippines to work in Canada, specifically within the garment industry, as a part of concerted, government- and industry-sponsored programs to fill labour demand within Winnipeg's garment industry in the late 1970s to the early 2000s. Notably, seven of the participants shared that they are mothers, which influenced their rationale for migrating to Canada. Most of these participants who identified as mothers migrated alongside their family.

One participant shared that her family had applied to migrate to Canada to reunite herself and her family with her husband, who was a migrant worker in the Middle East:

> "Nung mga panahon na iyon, yung aking asawa ay OFW [overseas Filipino worker] ng Middle East. Kaya lang nakakapagisip siya na kaysa naman mag-a-abroad siya, malayo siya sa amin, mabuti magsamasama kami sa isang bansa na maaaring makakatulong sa amin in the future lalo na sa mga bata. Kaya nag-apply kami dito as an immigrant."
>
> *"During those times, my husband was an OFW [overseas Filipino worker] in the Middle East. However, he thought that instead of going abroad to work, where he is away from us, it would be better for us to be together in a country that could help us with our future, especially for our kids. That's why we applied here as immigrants."*

Another participant also shared that she chose to migrate to Canada to support her family back home, stating "…syempre ako yung breadwinner, ako yung inaasahan ng mother ko, kasi ako yung nakakatulong [*Of course, I was the breadwinner, I'm the one my mother depends on, since I'm the one that could help]*".

Participants also had a wide variety of employment experiences before they migrated to Canada. Five of the participants shared that they worked in professional occupations, including teaching and public service within the government, in their home countries. Two of the participants worked directly within the garment industry. Three participants were self-employed and ran their own family-owned businesses. Three participants had experienced working in service, manufacturing, and retail industries. In spite of this wide variety in pre-immigration work experiences, upon arriving to Canada, all 13 participants became employed in various service and/or factory work, many of which are low-wage positions. Some participants reported working in more than one of these types of low-wage positions. Three participants shared that

their current position in Canada Goose was their first job in Canada. Three participants were employed within other garment manufacturing facilities prior to their employment at Canada Goose. Two participants had experienced working in manufacturing facilities outside of the garment industry. Three participants were employed in service work within food establishments and grocery store chains. One participant also worked in cleaning services prior to working in Canada Goose. Two participants described these occupations, which are often low-paid and precarious, as "survival jobs", where immigrant workers settle for occupations that they may be overqualified for so they and their families can survive as newcomers in Canada. Familial relationships were central in shaping the experiences of some participants. As a mother, one participant shared that she was hesitant to take on full-time work upon arriving in Canada because of her children:

> "Hindi muna ako full-time dahil naiisip ko yung adjustment ng mga bata sa school. So nagtagal din ako ng three years doon sa [name of grocery store chain] kasi nga meron akong [anak na] elementary, grade two. So parang natatakot ako na baka hindi siya maka-cope up o hindi kaagad siya nakapag-adjust sa environment kaya nag-part time lang ako doon at saka yung aking mga high schoolers, gusto ko muna i-establish sila."
> *I did not take on full-time work because I was thinking of my children's adjustment in school. So, I lasted three years in [name of grocery store chain] because one of my children was only in grade two. I was afraid that they may not be able to cope or adjust to their environment, so I chose to only work part-time. Including my kids in high school, I wanted to establish them first."*

Another participant also shared that despite experiencing hardship working as a newcomer, she needed to "swallow her pride" (trans.) because her father fell ill, and thus she needed to send remittances to care for him.

As a follow-up question, some participants were asked whether they had experienced working in unionized workplaces prior to Canada Goose. Only two participants shared that they had experiences in unionized workplaces prior to their employment in Canada Goose. Seven participants shared that they had no previous experiences working in unionized workplaces. Participants occupied various roles at Canada Goose, but majority (n=7) worked as sewing machine operators. All of the participants worked on a full-time basis at Canada Goose. Additionally, three participants shared that they were also employed in part-time work alongside their full-time jobs at Canada Goose.

Experiences Working at Canada Goose before Unionization

Many of the participants were able to recall what the working conditions at Canada Goose were like before the union was established. Although two participants shared that there were no differences in terms of the working conditions in Canada Goose prior to and after unionization, a number of participants shared their experiences navigating the dynamics between the management and the workers prior to unionization, which contributed to what has been referred to in previous reports as a "climate of fear" in their workplace (Cabana 2021). Notably, participants recalled experiencing unfair or unpleasant treatment from management at Canada Goose, where management and supervisors exercised rude behaviour and favouritism towards the employees, which worsened as the Canada Goose workforce grew larger over the years. As one shop steward described,

> "Before the formation of the union, the management and supervisors acted like the lords. Scolding employees in the public was common."

Two participants described this behaviour from management as "power-tripping" (trans.), leading to an environment where workers could not express their concerns about their workplace conditions or question the decisions of the management. When asked if workers could influence their workplace conditions before the union was formed, one participant answered, "no, sila ang masusunod. Wala kaming boses na mga manggagawa." (No, we had to follow them. We workers did not have a voice.) One worker shared that she had experienced emotional distress because of this inability to voice her frustrations about how the management had treated them. Another worker shared that despite feeling angry about the way they were being treated, she "stayed quiet" because she needed money at the time.

For the workers, their lack of voice or control permeated other aspects of the workers' employment conditions, especially their perceived job security. Three workers made note of the rapid turnover of workers at Canada Goose, where workers were easily replaced. To one of the participants, their job security was dependent upon how favourable their relationship was to the management. As one of the participants described, the rapid nature in which workers were terminated from the job mimicked "birds being shot down" (trans.). One worker shared that seeing her co-workers losing their jobs caused feelings of nervousness or precarity related to their job security:

> "…naalala ko nun parang two years lang yata ako sa Canada Goose nun, meron akong isang ka-work, bigla siyang pinatawag tapos in-escort nalang siya. Yun lang, wala na siyang magawa. Tapos kada napapatawag kami sa office, kinakabahan kami… bahala na kung anong mangyayari."

"I remember, during my second year of working at Canada Goose, I had this one co-worker who was called [to the office] and then was escorted out. That was it, they couldn't do anything. So, every time we got called to the office, we got nervous… whatever happens, happens."

Related to job security, workers' leave entitlements were also affected by their relationship with the management. Two workers recalled that the likelihood that their request for a leave would get approved was contingent upon the management's favouritism among the workers. To many of the workers, this inability to go on leave was especially impactful because of their identity as immigrants. Two participants shared that it was common for immigrant workers who needed to go back to their home countries for an extensive period of time to have little to no access to leave entitlements. Instead, they were told to quit their jobs at Canada Goose and then re-apply once they return. This common practice affected the workers' level of seniority, which resets if they leave the company.

Other concerns that participants cited included breaks that were less than the 30 minutes mandated by Employment Standards in Manitoba. Another worker also cited that prior to unionization, workers rarely experienced increases in pay beyond increases mandated by the provincial government. For reference, the nominal minimum wage rate in Manitoba increased by $2.90 from October 2009 to October 2021, in comparison to the $3.85 increase from October 2022 to October 2024 (Employment Standards Manitoba n.d.). News coverage from the time that the union effort was occurring also reported health and safety violations during the COVID-19 pandemic, including "inadequate sanitation and PPE [personal protective equipment] distribution and a padlocked emergency exit" (Boguslaw 2021). Factoring in all of these experiences, one

worker stated that Canada Goose "[did not] care about immigrant[s]" and that they were "treat[ed]… like animal[s]":

> "…yun yung pakiramdam namin ng mga workers before na tini-treat kami ng Canada Goose like an animal, na talagang push nang push. Anong akala niyo samin, kabayo? Na hayop, na kung ano lang ang gusto ninyo, kayo lagi ang masusunod na push lang kayo ng push na ganun kahit na nahihirapan ang mga tao?
>
> *"…that was what us workers felt before, that Canada Goose treated us like animals, where we had to push and push. What do you think we are? Horses? An animal following anything you want, for us to push and push even when people are exhausted?"*

The Union Certification Process

In light of these conditions, a union drive began in Canada Goose in 2019. One of the shop stewards who was involved in the union drive recalled that it began in one of the facilities located on Mountain Avenue after she connected with one of the organizers at Workers United Canada Council through her community. Upon asking other workers if they would like to form a union within their facility, they began collecting signatures on the union's application card. One shop steward recalled her experiences engaging in door-to-door recruitment with WUCC organizers:

> "So yung organizer, sumasama ako after ng Canada Goose, ng trabaho ko, kahit pagod ako non dahil… desidido ako na magkaroon kami ng union. Eh kaso, mga takot. So edi akong mag-isa, kasa- kasama ko yung organizer, pumupunta kami sa bahay-bahay... Nung una, siya ang nagpapaliwanag sa mga worker, hanggang sa kalaunan, napapabayaan na niya ako… Pero magkasama kami. Naiiwan siya sa sasakyan kasi kadalasan mas tiwala sakin yung worker kasi kakilala ako kaysa dun sa organizer."

"With the organizer, I would accompany them after [my job at] Canada Goose even when I felt tired, because I was determined to form a union for us. However, [my co-workers] were afraid. So, I alone, with the organizer, would go to their houses. At first, they would explain to the workers, until they were able to leave me [to do the explaining]. But we went together. They would stay in the car because most times, the workers would have more trust in me since they already knew me compared to the organizer."

Alongside her involvement in the recruitment process, she recalled that she received training and educational opportunities because of her involvement in the union drive:

"…i-trenain din nila ako, pinadala ako sa ibang lugar para lang ma-train ako sa organizing. So unti-unti nagkakaroon ako ng knowledge… hanggang sa… napapabayaan ako sa pakikipagusap sa mga workers."

"They had also trained me and sent me to different places to train me in organizing. So, I slowly gained knowledge… until… I was independently able to talk to the workers."

However, the union drive was not without challenges. One worker recalled that when they were new to Canada Goose, they were already met with anti-union sentiment which prevented workers from organizing for fear of losing their job. Two workers shared similar fears about losing their job in supporting the union drive. One shop steward even recalled having to use coded language when talking about the union drive while at work so as to not attract the attention of supervisors:

"… [sa] bawat line, kumukuha ako ng pwedeng maging lider. So may mga code pa kami noon kasi nagtitinda ako ng mga beauty products… may number one, iyun yung may potential na maging leader; tapos yung number two, yun yung supporter; ang number three, yun yung 50/50; number four, yun yung anti. Kaya pag ako'y nasa Canada Goose,

pupunta ako sa line, para hindi kami maintindihan ng supervisor, sasabihin ko, “oh, meron akong tinda”. Sabi kong ganun, “Anong gusto mo? O-order ka ba?”. Ang sagot-sagot naman nung isa, “may order dito, one lipstick”… So ibig sabihin, merong isang worker dun sa line nila na pwedeng maging lider.”

“In every line, I would find potential leaders. We even had a code back then because I sold beauty products… number one would be potential leaders; number two would be supporters; number three would be 50/50; number four were anti[-union]. When I was at Canada Goose, I would go to a line, and so that the supervisor wouldn’t understand us, I would say, “oh, I have products to sell”. I would ask, “what do you want? Are you going to order?”. And they would answer, “there’s one order here, one lipstick”. That means there is one worker there who could be a leader.”

Another shop steward, who had extensive involvement in unions both in the Philippines and in Canada, shared that she was hesitant to organize the workers at Canada Goose because many of them were newcomers and immigrants. She shared that she had experienced how precarious jobs in garment manufacturing can be because of its susceptibility to capital flight:

“…nakita ko na ang mga tao, most of them are newcomer so they are depending on Canada Goose. So, I don’t want to organize them. Because nung nagtatrabaho pa ako nung andiyan na yung free trade, nagkaroon ng time na may nabalitaan ako ang pabrika… yung mga workers, pagdating nila sa kumpanya, sarado na. So, I don’t want it to happen and then mawawalan ng trabaho yung mga tao. So, I stay away from organizing. I don’t want people to run out of job because… that’s the only means of their living.”

"...I saw that many of the workers, most of them are newcomers so they are depending on Canada Goose. So, I don't want to organize them. Because when I was working and free trade [agreements] were introduced, there was a time when I heard about factories… where workers arrived at the company, and it had already closed. So, I don't want it to happen and then the workers would lose their jobs. So, I stay away from organizing. I don't want people to run out of jobs because… that's the only means of their living."

Some workers also shared or heard about concerns related to the effects of union dues on their earnings, which were already low. One worker expressed that she had been against the union drive precisely because she had heard that the union dues could deduct a sizable amount from her wages, which she had needed to support her child in the Philippines:

"Sabi ko, ayoko ng may union kasi sabi ko, [bawas] yun sa budget ko. Kasi nung mga time na yun, kailangang kailangan ko talaga ng pera. May sakit kasi noon ang anak ko sa Philippines. Talagang kailangang kailangan ko na talaga ng pera tapos walang overtime tapos mahigpit sila. Parang ganun ang pakiramdam ko noon."

"I said, I don't want a union because it takes away from my budget. Because at the time, I really needed the money. My child was sick in the Philippines. I really needed the money, and we didn't have overtime [pay], and they were strict. That's what I felt before."

Because of this hesitancy from workers to become involved in the union drive, organizers were keen on educating the workers about unions and convincing them to support the union drive. One worker recalled her strategies in recruiting workers to the union drive, where she would approach workers of different ethnicities to support the union:

"…sabi nila, ako daw yung maraming na-recruit. Kasi ang ginawa ko noon, [rinecruit] ko yung kumbaga, sa Chinese na grupo, Korean na grupo. Meron akong kinakausap kasi

marami nga akong kaibigan, kumbaga, mga koneksyon. Kumbaga, meron akong mga Indian ng mga koneksyon, kung anong lahi. Yun lang naman noon ang maraming lahi. Pinoy, Korean, Chinese, Indian.

"They told me I was the one who recruited many workers. Because what I had done was, I recruited groups of Chinese workers, groups of Korean workers. I talked to them because I had friends, connections. I had connections who were Indian, whatever ethnicities there were. Those were the major ethnic groups before: Filipinos, Koreans, Chinese, and Indian".

Challenges Faced During the Certification Process

This process of recruitment continued until the organizers had enough signatories to file for certification within one of the facilities, CGW2, which occurred in April 2019. However, because Canada Goose had three facilities in Winnipeg, the organizers were advised by the Manitoba Labour Board to expand the union drive to the two other facilities, CGW1 and CGW3. The organizers continued recruiting workers until they had to change their strategies in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the face of COVID-19 restrictions, which hindered the possibility of talking to workers face-to-face as they had previously done, they began to leave union application cards in workers' mailboxes and talked them through the process of signing over the phone. One major challenge during the pandemic was that one of the union leaders were temporarily laid off as a consequence of factory closures because of COVID-19 and did not receive a call to return despite other workers being called to return. This led to the initiation of a social media campaign using Twitter (now X), Instagram, and Facebook to bring awareness to the working conditions at Canada Goose and to call on Canada Goose to reinstate the union leader. One shop steward recalled feeling emboldened and brave upon reading positive and

supportive comments about the union drive on social media from a wide variety of individuals and groups, including a group of garment workers in Turkey. Because of the attention that the campaign garnered, the union leader successfully returned to work.

The Unfair Labour Practices (ULP) Complaint

Other tactics to hinder the union drive were employed at Canada Goose. Not only have union leaders been terminated, but workers were actively encouraged by the management to sign letters objecting to the union drive, leading to the filing of an unfair labour practices (ULP) complaint against Canada Goose in December 2019 (Manitoba Labour Board 2019). The ULP complaint filed by Workers United Canada Council consisted of four allegations against Canada Goose. The first allegation involved "disparaging comments about the union and the union's application for certification" made by a manager during a production meeting (Manitoba Labour Board 2019, p. 9). The second allegation encompassed the letters of objection against the union certification application that workers were encouraged to sign during working hours. Third, WUCC alleged that workers were offered employer-wide benefits and programs during the union's application for certification, and argued that these were offered with the intention of undermining the union drive. Lastly, the fourth allegation concerned a communication made by the employer which similarly was intended to discourage unionization.

With regards to the first allegation, the production manager had attempted to solicit information about who had and who had not signed letters of objection, and negatively spoke about the changes that the union (including union dues, wage increases, vacation, and benefits) would make within the workplace to those in attendance at the meeting. Initially, the production manager denied making these remarks; however, these comments were documented through a voice recording and a transcript of the meeting made by one of the attending workers, leading to

the admission and termination of the production manager (Manitoba Labour Board 2019, pp. 12–13).

With regards to the second allegation, workers had testified seeing other workers being asked to sign letters of objection in the lead tech office in CGW2 during working hours. One participant in this project, who was working as an assistant supervisor during the time of the union certification process, recalled that she was asked to solicit signatures on letters of objection from other workers. Testimonies were also documented of workers being advised of what to write as reasons for objection, which was framed by one of the employees soliciting signatures as necessary given that some of the workers at Canada Goose were not fluent in English (Manitoba Labour Board 2019, p. 14).

With regards to the third allegation, the employer introduced several benefits around the same time as the union certification process, including extended wellness benefits as part of an annual wellness week; posting the holiday schedule earlier than they had previously; 'themed events' in the workplace; and a volunteer and charity program (Manitoba Labour Board 2019, pp. 17–18). Although the union alleged that these were introduced to undermine their application for certification, the employer denied that these benefits were intended to serve that purpose. Lastly, with regards to the fourth and final allegation, the union had sent out a fact sheet to employees outside of working hours to address rumours circulating around the workplace about the effects of unionization at Canada Goose. To address the information in this fact sheet, which the employer believed to be 'untrue' and suggestive, a response to the fact sheet was communicated to employees, which one worker in the hearing testified to include suggestive, anti-union language.

Factoring in these allegations, the union argued that Canada Goose had "engaged in Unfair Labour Practices and that discretionary certification should ensue" (Manitoba Labour Board 2019, p. 27). This argument follows Section 41(a) in the Manitoba Labour Relations Act, whereby discretionary certification is provided if the board agrees that the employer committed an unfair labour practice resulting in a situation where "the true wishes of the employees are not likely to be ascertained" (Government of Manitoba 2024). However, the board concluded that the upper management was not aware of the actions made in the first and second allegations, leading to the board imposing a fine of $2,000 towards Canada Goose. Despite being unable to attain discretionary certification as a result of the ULP complaint, one of the participants who was involved in the union certification drive nevertheless viewed the ruling as a victory for the union.

The continued recruitment efforts of the union two years after the ULP complaint eventually led to the union being able to apply for certification once receiving enough signatories in their application. Because the Pallister government had eliminated card-check or single-step union certification (whereby unions can legally form after a percentage of their membership signs a union card) and in place, imposed mandatory vote union certification in 2016 (Harney 2024, p. 6), the union instituted a secret ballot vote in late 2021. On December 1, 2021, 1,200 workers in three of Winnipeg's Canada Goose facilities voted to join Workers United Canada Council to represent their interests in the workplace. The voting process, which involved a total of 886 votes, resulted in 758 workers (86%) voting in favour of unionization, "[marking] the largest private sector victory for manufacturing workers in 30 years" (Workers United Canada Council 2021). One shop steward involved in the union drive recalled receiving a call about the results of the secret ballot vote while at work, and excitedly sharing the news to other workers.

Effects of Unionization on the Working Conditions at Canada Goose

To understand the effects that the union has had within Canada Goose, seven out of the 15 questions asked participants about their perspectives regarding changes that the union has made in terms of the different dimensions of precarious employment, as operationalized by Cranford and Vosko (2006). This includes questions about differences in earnings, pay, or wages; non-wage benefits, or "social wage"; control or influence over their working conditions; and job security (Cranford and Vosko 2006, pp. 48–50). Following lines of inquiry in feminist political economy (FPE), questions were also asked, beyond Cranford and Vosko's operationalization of precarious employment, about the effects of unionization within the home and within their community, as well as differences that gender made within the union. The changes that participants identified are then triangulated with their collective agreement. Lastly, participants were asked about improvements that they would like to see within the union.

Differences in terms of Pay or Wages

In terms of pay or wages, 7 participants understood and acknowledged that the union successfully bargained for incremental increases in the workers' rates of pay which would amount to a 10% increase from April 2022 to April 2025, as stated in Schedule "A" of their collective agreement (Canada Goose Inc. and Workers United Canada Council 2022, p. 27). Specifically, this involves a 40¢ per hour increase in April 2022; a 1% increase in October 2022; a 2.5% increase in April 2023; another 2.5% increase in April 2024; and lastly, a 4% increase in April 2025. However, these pay increases, which were negotiated in 2022, were complicated by increases in the minimum wage rate introduced by the provincial government in 2022. During the time that the collective agreement was negotiated, the minimum wage rate in Manitoba was $11.95. Since then, the minimum wage rate has increased to $15.80 in October 2024, and is set

to increase to $16.00 by October 2025. One shop steward who was involved in the bargaining process admitted that they were not aware that such increases would occur. Since these changes in the provincial minimum wage rate are higher than the proposed increases outlined in the collective agreement, the workers now receive the minimum wage rate imposed throughout Manitoba, as they had done so prior to the formation of the union. As a result of this, 5 of the participants stated that there were no differences in terms of pay because of the union, with one worker sharing that she had gotten used to being paid at the minimum wage rate.

Differences in terms of Non-Wage Benefits

Although three participants stated that they observed no differences in terms of the benefits they receive at Canada Goose after the union was formed, seven participants stated that the union had an impact in terms of the enforcement of holiday or leave entitlements at their workplace, which was reflected in their understanding of their collective agreement. One worker acknowledged that they now had access to a mandatory personal day per calendar year, which is stated in Article 26 of their collective agreement (Canada Goose Inc. and Workers United Canada Council 2022, p. 19). Another worker mentioned the expanded bereavement leave, as stated in Article 21 of their collective agreement, which previously lasted for 2 days but now can last for up to 4 days, and now considers family members beyond the immediate family. She also noted that paid vacations and vacation choice now followed seniority within Canada Goose, as stated in Article 24 of their collective agreement, where employment tenure determines the length and degree of choice that workers have in terms of their paid vacations (Canada Goose Inc. and Workers United Canada Council 2022, pp. 17–18). With regards to compassionate leave, two workers recognized that Canada Goose now made considerations to accommodate workers who need to return to their home country if emergencies occur. In terms of health insurance, three

workers stated that there were no changes in their health coverage, which they had already been receiving as employees of Canada Goose prior to the formation of the union. However, two participants shared that they experienced an expansion in healthcare coverage. It is unclear whether these expansions exist based on the collective agreement, which mentions a benefit fund provided by the employer in Article 27, but does not comprehensively list the current healthcare coverage of workers at Canada Goose (Canada Goose Inc. and Workers United Canada Council 2022, p. 19). Due to this, the study is thus unable to fully gauge differences in healthcare coverage after the union was formed.

Differences in terms of Job Security

Despite one worker stating that their perceived level of job security remained the same after the formation of the union, other participants (n=5) shared that they now feel more secure in their job because of the union's ability to represent them in disputes or conflicts in the workplace. Three participants stated that their job security was improved because of the enforcement of leave entitlements, as outlined in Articles 21, 24, and 26 of their collective agreement, which means that they do not have to leave their jobs to go on compassionate leave. Some participants stated that they felt more secure in their jobs because their employment did not depend on their production efficiency, as they felt it had before. One worker mentioned that workers with low efficiency are now given a chance to improve instead of immediately being terminated. Because of the impact that worker-management relationships had on job security before unionization, three workers recognized the impact of the union in terms of mediating these conflicts, which previously led to the termination of workers. As one worker shared,

> "Ngayon… protected ang mga employee. May kasalanan man niya, o nasa tama man siya o sa mali, hindi [siya] kaagad agad matatanggal kasi pag-aaralan, pagimbestigahan, ng

mga representative namin… Hindi sila basta basta umatake sa amin na mga manggagawa."

"Today… the employees are protected. They may be at fault, or they may be in the right or [they may be] wrong, [but] they are not immediately fired because our representatives study [and] investigate [it]… They cannot suddenly attack us workers."

The effects of the union on job security was observed by participants when Canada Goose temporarily laid off 17 per cent of its corporate workforce in March 2024 (The Canadian Press 2024). Three participants attributed the ability of laid off workers to return to the union, with one worker stating,

"…last year, nag-tawagan sa Canada Goose ng mga lay-off. Ang daming na lay off, iniisa isa. Pero at least di kami kinakabahan. Sabi namin, at least may masasandalan kami. Yung mga na-lay off na yun, ngayon naibalik sila. Hindi sila talaga totally na tinanggal. Pero kung wala sigurong union, siguro parang hindi na sila matatawagan. Hahayaan na sila."

"…last year, Canada Goose called for lay-offs. Many workers got laid off, one by one. But at least, we weren't nervous. We said, at least we had something to lean on. Those that got laid-off, they were now able to return. They were not totally fired. But if we didn't have a union, they probably would not be called back. They would just let them be."

Additionally, three workers also recognized that the workers' level of seniority determined who was temporarily laid off and who was not, the enforcement of which was attributed to the union. Two other participants also shared, in general terms, that they feel that their job security has improved after the union was formed.

Differences in terms of the Ability of Workers to Control Workplace Conditions

The dimension of control or contingency was overwhelmingly where the participants found differences within their workplace because of the union. 12 out of 13 participants agreed that because of the union, they now hold a degree of control or influence over their working conditions at Canada Goose through mechanisms such as the grievance procedure included in their collective agreement. The grievance procedure outlined in Article 8 of their current collective agreement clearly states the number of working days in which the union and the management need to resolve or address each step of the grievance procedure (Canada Goose Inc. and Workers United Canada Council 2022, pp. 5–6). The collective agreement also outlines the process of arbitration in Article 10, if the grievance procedure is exhausted by either the union or the management (Canada Goose Inc. and Workers United Canada Council 2022, pp. 8–9). Four workers shared positive experiences with the union, where they were able to bring up an issue that they had in the workplace which was resolved between the union and the management. Three other participants also recalled hearing other co-workers being able to resolve issues within the workplace through the union. One shop steward shared her experience filing a grievance regarding a supervisor's behaviour for a worker that she represented:

> "…ang ginawa ng taong to, that is [name of worker], nag-file siya ng grievance, and *I am his shop steward, so we made it here, the grievance. When I came to work, I hand it to the HR, the grievance. And in a few days, that production manager is out. But for sure they are investigating, the management, when they say I am right, we are right then they let this person go. That's the importance of the union. I cannot do that; nobody can do that if we have no union. We did it with the union*."

"…what this person did, that is [name of worker], he filed a grievance, and I am his shop steward, so we made it here, the grievance. And in a few days, that production manager is out. But for sure they are investigating, the management, when they say I am right, we are right then they let this person go. That's the importance of the union. I cannot do that; nobody can do that if we have no union. We did it with the union."

Beyond the grievance procedure, three workers mentioned that they appreciated the ability to re-evaluate time studies for each respective garment style, which is used to gauge how much time (referred to as standard allowable minutes, or "SAM") is allotted to efficiently manufacture a specific style of garment. Because efficiency plays a significant role in determining the value of their work in Canada Goose, the ability to re-evaluate these time studies was important for workers, with one participant sharing:

"…yung ibinigay nilang SAM ay para sa amin, hindi *enough*. *So, we can always ask to re-study whereas before our mouth is shut. But this time, we can ask to re-timestudy*."

"…the minutes that they give us is, to us, not enough. So, we can always ask to re-study whereas before our mouth is shut. But this time, we can ask to re-timestudy."

Workers also valued the ability to generally raise concerns to their shop stewards, who can assist them in addressing these issues. One worker likened this ability to control or influence their working conditions to "having a voice":

"…dahil member na kami ng union, kaya na [naming] magsalita. Kung ano yung gusto [naming] ipaglaban, kaya [naming] i-voice out. Meron na [kaming] sandalan kasi nga merong union. Hindi kagaya dati, kapag ano yung sinabi ng company sa amin, kahit labag samin, kahit ayaw ng mga empleyado, okay lang. Oo lang ng oo. Pero ngayon, kaya naman

mag-voice out… hindi na kami natatakot kasi alam namin may matatakbuhan kami anytime.

"…because we are union members, we can now speak. Whatever we want to fight for, we can now voice out. We now have something to lean on because we have a union. Unlike before, where whatever the company tells us, even when we don't want it, even when the employees don't agree, it's okay. [We] just keep saying yes. But now, we can voice it out. We do not get scared anymore because we know we have someone to run to anytime."

A non-Filipino worker also shared that they appreciated the ability of the union to address her concerns, which she is not comfortable sharing with the management: "I believe [the] union is a good way for help… we cannot go to the employer and… some of the people are not comfortable but they feel like [the] union are their friends… so they can tell them what [problem they have], so they can help them." Additionally, three workers valued that the collective agreement clearly outlined and enforced their rights in the workplace, with one worker believing that this was able to balance the power relations between the workers and the management at Canada Goose.

Differences at Home and in the Community

Following the expanded notion of what constitutes the economy within feminist political economy (FPE), which includes the non-market spheres of the home and the community, workers were also asked if the union has made an impact in their lives beyond the workplace. Compared to the previous questions on the effects of unionization on the dimensions of precarious work, majority of the participants (n=7) did not observe any differences within the home or in their community because of the union. However, other workers (n=3)valued the

impact of the union in increasing their awareness about workers' rights. One non-Filipino worker stated,

> "…before, when I haven't yet joined into the union, I know nothing about that… [the] management will not take any time to educate all the knowledge about the collective agreement, the regulations and rules… But how can we deal with some urgent situations?... So, I think it is very helpful for me to get to know more [an] understanding of the agreement… So that when we're just in trouble, we can speak up. If we know the rules and regulations, we can comply with the regulations and the rights, limitations to speak up and how to protect ourselves. That's very good, and I think it's really helpful for each worker just working in our workplace."

One of the shop stewards also shared that she educates her friends about the information that she learns through the union:

> "…yung mga natututunan ko dito, na-i-[relay] ko sa mga kaibigan ko. Ang sabi ko sa kanila, pagka ganito, alamin mo kung ano yung union mo. Alamin mo kung ano local number mo. Para at least alam mo kung ano [yun]. Tapos magtanong ka kung sino yung shop steward o union [representative] nyo para at least alam mo. Kaya hindi man ako nakatapos ng pinakamataas na course, ang dami kong natututunan ngayon."
>
> *"... the things I learn here, I relay to my friends. What I tell them is, with this, you need to learn what your union is. Learn what your local number is. So at least you know what it is. Then ask who your shop steward or union representative is, so you know. So, even if I wasn't able to achieve the highest course [or educational attainment], I've learned so much now."*

Beyond holding a greater awareness of workers' rights, two participants shared feeling empowered because of their involvement with the union. One shop steward felt as though her union leadership has impacted the way she interacts with other people in her life beyond the workplace:

> "…pag ako nakikipagusap sa mga kaibigan, kahit nga sa mga tita ko, parang may diin, yung pang-leader mo pa rin ang [lumalabas]."
>
> *"...when I talk to my friends, or even with my aunts, there's a fierceness, where my [inner] leader comes out."*

One of the non-Filipino shop stewards also revealed that her involvement with the union has helped her strengthen her connections with people within her ethnic community who work at Canada Goose, stating: "They always see me as their leader. They come to me like, "[A01], we have this kind of problem, can you help us?". So, I feel like they are more confident in me, like, they trust me and I do feel like I need to help them."

Lastly, two workers stated that feeling more secure in their employment through the union has contributed to the security they feel in their personal life. One worker, who had been diagnosed with a chronic illness, shared:

> "nung magkaroon kami ng union, ako… [hindi] na ko nangangamba kung saka-sakaling nasa labas ako ng kumpanya… may sakit ako, hindi ako nakapasok ng mga ilang araw, basta na lang tatanggalin... Kasi binibigyan ka nila ng pagkakataon na ipaliwanag mo kung bakit ka wala sa trabaho… dahil may union, ipinaglalaban nila na bigyan ako ng tamang trabaho na pwede akong magtrabaho ng maayos at hindi nakakapinsala sa kalusugan ko rin…"

"…when we got a union… I was not afraid anymore [that] when I'm outside of the company, [and] I have a sickness, I can't come to work for a few days, [and] suddenly get fired… Because they give me a chance to explain why I can't come to work… because we have a union, they fought to give me a job where I could work well and [which] doesn't negatively impact my health as well…"

Additionally, another worker described that having a union in her workplace helps her "sleep better at night" because she feels that there is a lesser threat to her employment, sharing that union presence provides her with "peace of mind".

Differences Made by Gender within the Union

Because of the historically gendered nature of work within the garment industry and in Canada Goose, one line of inquiry questions the role of gender in shaping the dynamics within the union and the workplace within Canada Goose. Four participants were quick to point out that gender did not play a discriminatory role in the union, where all workers, regardless of gender, could participate in the union. One worker stated that the union has evened the playing field between male and female workers by allowing female workers to undertake service tasks beyond sewing:

"…dati… pagka ang babae, ito lang ang pwede kong gawin. Iba yung ibibigay na work sa lalake. Pagka lalaki, mas pabor sila kasi… mas maraming pwedeng ibigay na trabaho. Mas magiging maraming OT kasi mas marami siyang kaya compared dun sa babae na tahi lang… Nung may union na, parang equal na yung treatment… kung ano yung [kaya ng] lalaki, kaya na din yung babae. Meron na rin kaming mga babaeng service, kasi [yun yung] tawag doon sa mga babae na nagbubuhat na mga fabric, dadalhin dito, dadalhin diyan. Pero

dati ang mga lalaki lang ang ginagawang service, tapos sila yung mas matataas na sahod kasi sa service, mas mabibigat ang trabaho."

"...before...with women, they can only do one task. Men would be given different tasks. With men, it favours them because... they can receive more [types of] jobs. They can get more OT [overtime] because they can do more compared to the women who only sew... When we got a union, we received equal treatment. What men can do, women can do as well. We now have women in service [jobs], because that's what they call women who lift fabric, delivering it to different places. But before, only men could have service [jobs], so they would get a higher pay since service [jobs] have heavier jobs."

Despite some participants sharing that gender makes no difference within the union, four participants expressed that they value having female representation within the union. Participants felt more comfortable bringing their concerns to female shop stewards, who they thought are more inclined to having a better understanding of their issues. One non-Filipino shop steward shared that workers may be more inclined to approach female shop stewards over male shop stewards, even when they come from a different ethnic background:

"… if it's a male [representative], I'm not sure. Because as I understand, most of the Canada Goose employees are not really good in English… So, for them, it might be more comfortable speaking with a female, even though we may speak a different language."

Two participants also viewed the union as a way to empower its female workers, with one shop steward stating: "…since our society is more dominated by men, it is good for female employees to have a voice to anything, be it in the workplace or at home." Additionally, another shop steward shared that mothers working in Canada Goose may benefit from being able to

control their working conditions and adjust their work accordingly with regards to the care labour they perform:

> "Yung iba, nagsasabi sa Canada Goose dahil minsan walang mapagiwanan sa anak, o kaya naman susundo sa anak, kailangan mag leave ng maaga. So na dating hindi, ngayon, napapakiusapan. Pero hindi naman all the time ganun."
>
> *"The others, they ask Canada Goose, because sometimes they have no one to leave their children to, or need to pick up their kids, that they need to leave early. Before, they couldn't; now, they can ask about it. But it doesn't happen all the time."*

Overall Differences Made by the Union

Table 4: Summary of Changes Made by the Union as Identified by Participants

Differences Made by the Union*		# of Participants
Wages/Earnings	Incremental Increases on a Year-to-Year basis	7
	No Impact	5
	Impact on Efficiency Calculations for Pieceworkers	1
Non-wage Benefits	Enforcement of Leave Entitlements	7
	No Changes in Healthcare Coverage	3
	Expanded Healthcare Coverage	2
Job Security	Perceived Job Security due to Union Representation	5
	Perceived Job Security due to Effect of Union Presence in Enforcement of Leave Entitlements	3
	Perceived Job Security due to Enforcement of Seniority	3
	Perceived Job Security in General	2
	No Impact	1

Control over Workplace Conditions	Addressing Issues or Conflicts about Conditions of Work through the Union	12
	Impact of Collective Agreement in Outlining Workers' Rights	2
	Ability to Ask for Time Studies	2
	Balancing Power Relations between Workers and Management	1
	No Impact	1
Differences at Home or in the Community	Increased Awareness about Workers' Rights	3
	Feelings of Empowerment Associated with Union Involvement or Presence	2
	Feelings of Security due to Union Presence and Representation	2
	Increased Connectedness with Community	1
Difference Made by Gender within the Union	Lack of Gender Discrimination within the Union	4
	Importance of Female Representation within Union	4
	Female Empowerment	2
	Effects of Union on Care Work	1
Overall Difference	Yes, the Union has made a difference	13
	No, the Union has not made a difference	0

**Themes under each category are not mutually exclusive – some participants answered with more than one change.*

Overall, the perspectives of the 13 participants about the effects of the union within Canada Goose were mostly positive. Although some workers saw limited gains or differences in terms of dimensions in precarious work such as pay and benefits, the impact of the union on other

dimensions such as control and job security were apparent in the workers' responses (Table 4). Workers overwhelmingly valued the ability of the union to represent their interests in the workplace to generate better working conditions, thus influencing the degree of job security they hold. As one worker stated,

> "…malaki ang talagang ambag niya sa amin para manatili kaming kampante, nagtatrabaho kami ng masaya. Hindi nakakatakot na alam mo yung konting mali, tanggal ka kaagad… Ngayon hindi na kasi pinaglalaban ka."
>
> *"…The impact of the union is really huge for us in keeping us feeling secure, [where] we are working happily. It's not scary where a small mistake immediately gets you fired… Today, that doesn't happen because they fight for you."*

To some workers, the union is perceived to be a mediator between the workers and the management in Canada Goose, reflecting the previous dynamic between workers and management prior to the formation of the union. One shop steward stated, "…every workplace should have a union because I think unions function as a very important bond or bridge between management and the workers". Another worker stated that the union "neutralizes" conflicts that may exist between workers and management, stating: "kung nakikita o nararamdaman ng [Workers] United, ng mga workers, na hindi makatarungan yung [ginagawa] ng administrasyon, nandudoon ang union. Sila yung nag neutralize. Sila yung nakikipagusap sa administration para mapagbigyan both parties. [trans: *if Workers United, or the workers, see or feel that what the administration is being unfair, the union is there. They neutralize [it]. They talk to the administration to achieve a compromise with both parties]*".

Lastly, participants also viewed the union as a method of recourse in addressing their concerns within the workplace. Workers valued that they are now able to approach shop stewards

about the problems they encounter with their working conditions, including their relationship with the management or their supervisor. Comparing the conditions before and after the union was formed, one shop steward described that the union gave them a voice, stating,

> "…wala kaming boses noon na kahit magsalita ka nang magsalita… ang dating ay "kami ang boss, hindi mo kami pwedeng [sagutin]"… yung respect sa mga workers, hindi mo makita. Pero nung kami'y magkaroon na ng union… nakikita mo yung pagkakaiba. Nagkaroon kami ng boses."
>
> *"…we didn't have a voice back then even when you spoke out… the gist is that "we're the [bosses], you can't question us"… the respect to workers, you can't observe. But when we formed a union… you can see the difference. We now have a voice."*

Possible Improvements within the Union

As a part of the action-oriented nature of community-based research (CBR) approaches, participants were also asked if there were any improvements they would like to see within the union. Four participants, three of whom were not Filipino, appreciated the union's recent efforts to improve ethnocultural representation through electing more shop stewards from diverse backgrounds. One participant described,

> "…before, the former union, as I recognize, they're all Filipinos. The racial diversity is not really working [within] the former [representation]. But right now… we have representatives from Filipinos, we have representatives in Chinese, we have representatives for Ukraine, because those are the major ethnic groups in Canada Goose. And some people who speak in Punjabi from India. Canada is an immigration country, so diversity is actually most important."

In terms of other potential changes, five participants expressed the need to improve their existing collective agreement. One worker said that she would like to see seniority-based pay increases for workers who have worked at Canada Goose for extensive periods of time. Two other workers stated that they would appreciate improvements in their existing leave entitlements, with one worker suggesting the inclusion of paid sick leave. Another worker expressed the need for flexibility regarding their vacation choice: currently, workers are highly encouraged to schedule their paid vacation days during factory closures in the summer.

Other suggestions revolved around improvements associated to the extent to which the union is able to represent their workers. One shop steward shared that she would like to have a better understanding of the working conditions of pieceworkers to represent them better. Another worker, who works at the Bannatyne facility, also shared that she would like to have more shop stewards in her workplace so they could more easily seek support. Lastly, using a suggestion box was also recommended by one of the workers so that union members could provide suggestions about the union. In addition to these improvements, two workers shared that they would like to see more opportunities to interact and connect with other union members and to increase worker solidarity through meetings during working hours or through social gatherings after working hours. The union currently organizes both types of meetings. One of these workers, however, recognized that the ability of workers to attend social gatherings outside of the workplace may be limited by their family-related and other obligations. All of these improvements were communicated to the union representatives at Canada Goose.

Discussion

In light of these results, this project comes to several key findings: (a) social locations such as race, citizenship, and gender play a pivotal role in shaping the conditions of production and

reproduction of Filipino immigrant women working at Canada Goose, particularly in terms of their experiences with precarious work; (b) social locations such as race and citizenship had an impact in the union certification process by influencing the success of employer tactics used to undermine the union drive; and lastly, (c) unionization was effective in addressing the dimensions of contingency and control in the experiences of precarious employment by workers at Canada Goose, but was limited in terms of addressing issues in pay and benefits. Unions thus play a limited role in contributing to the reproductive bargain of Filipino immigrant women working at Canada Goose through shaping their conditions of work, which are intricately connected to their conditions of reproduction in the home and beyond. The impact of social reproduction on the precarious lives of Filipino immigrant women are thus two-fold: global processes which socially reproduce a flexible, mobile pool of labour, such as those maintained by labour export policies in the Philippines and immigration policies in Canada, structure the productive and reproductive conditions of Filipino immigrant women, who become likely to experience precarity as a consequence of their interlocking social locations. Therefore, to overcome the challenges associated with organizing workers of similar social locations, union organizers and the broader labour movement must employ an intersectional approach in understanding the productive and reproductive workers that they aim to represent.

Analyzing the Character of Precarious Work Experienced by Workers at Canada Goose

The results of this project affirm the idea that social locations such as race, gender, and citizenship impact the nature of work (particularly precarious work) that Filipino immigrant women face. In terms of citizenship, the context of migrant work between the Philippines and Canada was reflected in the workers' experiences of migrating to Canada. First, this is reflected in the experiences of two of the participants in being recruited to work in the Winnipeg garment

industry in the late 1990s to the early 2000s. Within sectors such as the garment industry, flexible and mobile workers are recruited from the Global South to the Global North to fill labour demand (Liu 2019, p. 172; Stephens 2005, p. 42). Within large-scale industrial sponsorship strategies, Filipino women were targeted because "the industry generally viewed women from the Philippines as docile workers who would not complain" (Stephens 2005, p. 42). Although both workers were given permanent resident (PR) status upon arriving, this did little to decrease their likelihood of working in precarious jobs, especially because they were expected to work in the garment industry. Informed by the dynamics between the Philippines and Canada, the recruitment of Filipino immigrant women workers in the Winnipeg garment industry reflects the global processes and institutions which reproduce a global supply of flexible and mobile labour. The experiences of Filipino immigrant workers are shaped by the systems of labour brokerage embedded in the Philippine state, which actively participates in the recruitment of migrant workers (Alipio 2019, p. 138; Rodriguez 2010, p. xvi). Rodriguez (2010) defines labour brokerage as "a neoliberal strategy that is comprised of institutional and discursive practices through which the Philippine state mobilizes its citizens and sends them abroad to work for employers throughout the world while generating a "profit" from the remittances" (p. x). Rooted in neoliberal ideology, the labour brokerage state is expected to follow the needs of globalizing capital for flexible and mobile labour (Lindio-McGovern 2007, p. 16; Munck 2010, 160). This includes the active role of the state in negotiating with labour-receiving states, commodifying the Filipino worker in the process. Of particular importance in this system of labour brokerage and migration are the dynamics that exist between labour-sending states such as the Philippines and labour receiving states such as Canada. Constructed as a mutually beneficial relationship, labour-receiving states such as Canada benefit from the availability of a flexible supply of labour made

possible through labour export policies, especially because of the country's historical dependence on migrant labour (Sharma 2019, p. 62; Stasiulis 2020, pp. 24–25; Walia 2010, p. 72). Persaud (2003) identifies that these dynamics are often racialized, whereby "raciocultural factors [govern] and [regulate] labor migration" (p. 129). Within these dynamics, the global division of labour has been segmented according to race and gender as maintained through citizenship, thus keeping these sources of labour cheap and flexible. Capital within labour-receiving states such as Canada, including Canada Goose and other garment manufacturing firms, thus benefit off the availability of a pool of labour reproduced by labour-sending states such as the Philippines, which is facilitated through the policies of both labour-sending states and labour-receiving states around migrant labour.

Beyond those recruited to work in the garment industry, a majority of the participants were able to migrate to Canada through federal and/or provincial family sponsorship programs, indicating that kin-based networks were essential in shaping the migration of Filipino women to Winnipeg. The importance of family was not only evident in terms of immigration pathways, but also in terms of the reasons that participants had migrated in the first place, with seven participants being mothers. With 4 participants sharing care-related reasons for migrating to Canada, there is some evidence that workers, regardless of gender, may choose to migrate because of the social reproductive obligations they have toward their families, which are often attributed to women and mothers. For example, two participants shared that they had migrated to provide a better quality of life for their children. Although a majority of the participants migrated alongside their families, remittances also play a key role in the decisions provided by participants to migrate, with two participants sharing that they have sent remittances to their immediate families (children, siblings) in the Philippines. This parallels a study from Maqueira and Moos

(2024) on the costs of social reproduction in Cuba, which found that remittances play a key role in the ability of families to absorb the costs of social reproduction amidst the lack of socially provisioned reproductive resources such as healthcare and education. This is consistent in the case of the Philippines, where remittances have been shown to positively contribute to household income and consumption (Kikkawa et al. 2024; Opiniano 2021). For one participant, the unpaid labour she undertakes as a mother also affected her employment experiences upon arriving in Canada, stating that she undertook part-time, low-wage work because she wanted to ensure that her children adapted to their new environments. Thus, the social reproductive processes and labours undertaken by women within their families have been shown to affect the experiences of migration and work of some of the participants in the study.

In terms of paid work, social locations also affected the types of work they undertook as newcomers in Canada. Literature on precarious citizenship attribute less precarity to immigrants holding permanent resident (PR) status because of their ability to share the protections enjoyed by citizen-workers (Sharma 2019, p. 63). Conceptualizing the difference between exploitation and expropriation through an intersectional frame of analysis, Fraser (2022a) identifies that exploitation is unique to the capital-labour relation, while expropriation is a "mechanism of accumulation" beyond the capital-labour relation done through "the forcible seizure, on a continuing basis, of the wealth of subjugated and minoritized peoples" (pp. 7-14). Fraser's (2022) conceptualization is productive to understanding labour segmentation in labour-receiving states as the nexus of exploitation and expropriation become increasingly determined by race, gender, and citizenship. Within Fraser's (2022b) distinctions between expropriation and exploitation, workers with PR status would not be considered 'expropriable' because their citizenship status confers access to rights and protections for citizen-workers. However, this does

little in minimizing the likelihood of precarious work experienced by workers, given that participants nonetheless experienced de-skilling upon arriving to Canada. Many of the jobs identified by participants can be thought about as precarious because of their low-paid and part-time nature, as well as their limited ability to control the conditions in the workplace. These include minimum wage jobs within the private sector in garment industry, the broader manufacturing sector, and the retail and service sectors, which are unlikely to be unionized (e.g., fast food, grocery store establishments, cleaning) (Anderson et al. 2006, p. 312). In line with the connections made between social locations and precarious work by Cranford and Vosko (2006), social locations such as race and citizenship influenced the employment experiences of participants as newcomers, as participants felt as though they needed to take on "survival jobs" (which are often precarious) because of the barriers and challenges that immigrants face in terms of seeking employment upon arriving to Canada. In the words of Alipio (2019), the precarity that the workers at Canada Goose experience paralell "[lives] lived in someone else's hands", whereby their lived experiences of precarious employment are shaped by structures and systems of labour migration extending from the Philippines to Canada. For some of these participants, all of whom are likely to undertake precarious work as gendered and racialized immigrant workers, this need to survive led them to work at Canada Goose.

Precarious Employment in Winnipeg's Canada Goose Facilities

Drawing on Cranford and Vosko's (2006) operationalization of the dimensions of precarious employment, the narratives of work at Canada Goose prior to unionization illustrate that workers engaged in jobs that were precarious in terms of pay, regulatory protection, contingency, and control. Workers recalled receiving the minimum wage for years on end, which follows Cranford and Vosko's (2006) first indicator of wages in precarious work (i.e., workers

earning less or equivalent to the minimum wage). In Manitoba, the current minimum wage of $15.80 remains below the living wage calculated for Winnipeg, indicating that the earnings of workers in Canada Goose falls below what they need to purchase commodities allotted for them to socially reproduce themselves (Harney et al. 2024, p. 6; Naidu 2023, p. 101). As a previously non-unionized workplace, workers at Canada Goose did not enjoy the degree of regulatory protection provided by union coverage and collective bargaining agreements, which has been shown to improve precarious working conditions (Cranford and Vosko 2006, p. 51). In terms of contingency or job security, workers still faced threats to their job security despite holding full-time positions at Canada Goose. This was because of the imbalance in power relations between workers and management that existed in Canada Goose prior to union formation, where the workers' relationship with their supervisor determined their job security to a certain degree. Therefore, in terms of the precarious employment experienced by workers at Canada Goose, the dimension of control contributed the most to their precarious employment, as the workers felt as though they did not have a say in terms of their working conditions, which were primarily shaped and dictated by the management. Characterized by power imbalances, the tumultuous relationship between the management and the workers at Canada Goose thus contributed to the degree of precarity experienced by workers in Canada Goose.

Analyzing the Union Certification Process and Employer Tactics at Canada Goose

Several factors shaped the union certification process which occurred at Canada Goose. First, provincial legislation regarding union certification in Manitoba impacted the length of the union drive. Because Manitoba returned to mandatory voting certification instead of card-check certification, the union had to institute a secret ballot vote after collecting enough signatories on their union application card (Harney 2024, p. 6). Although the union certification drive was

successful in Canada Goose, mandatory voting processes have been shown to negatively impact union certification by lengthening the certification process, thus allowing time for management to interfere in the union drive (Harney 2024, p. 6; Riddell 2001, p. 405). To encourage a union-friendly environment, card-check certification needs to be instituted to make it easier for workers to form unions. Manitoba has since returned to card-check certification in 2024 and has also instituted a ban on scab labour, both of which are beneficial to union formation (Manitoba Federation of Labour 2024).

Beyond the impact of provincial legislation, various tactics were used by the management at Canada Goose to undermine the union drive, with varying impacts. Most of these fall into what Roy (1980) refers to as "fear tactics": these include the dismissal of union leaders and the proliferation of anti-union messaging by some of the management at Canada Goose. Fear tactics were especially effective because of the character of workers at Canada Goose, many of whom were newcomers who were afraid of being associated to or involved with the union in fear of being laid off. This sentiment was made clear by one of the shop stewards, who was hesitant to assist in organizing the workers because of their experiences as newcomers and immigrants, stating: "I [stayed] away from organizing… I don't want people to run out of [jobs] because… that's the only means of their living". In this case, the effectiveness of fear tactics may be attributed to the working and living conditions of Filipino immigrant women in Canada, which are already likely to be precarious, thus deterring workers from being involved with the union. Similar to the findings of Ayentimi et al. (2019) and Dundon (2002), many of these fear tactics seem to have been informal and undocumented 'corridor tactics', which were not concerted and were opportunistic from the management at Canada Goose, as shown in the allegations found in the unfair labour practices (ULP) complaint filed in 2019. Although the ULP complaint did not

lead to discretionary certification being granted to the union, the ULP complaint was successful in bringing awareness to the ad hoc tactics created by some of the management at Canada Goose to undermine the union drive, which may have contributed to the neutral disposition adopted by management in Canada Goose to prevent further damage to their reputation (and in turn, their profits) going forward. Additionally, the public campaign initiated by WUCC to call for the return of the laid off union leader had a similar effect. Therefore, publicity and campaigns may be effective tools in combatting against the fear tactics used by employers against union drives by compelling employers to maintain a neutral stance in response to union drives and in turn, prevent any impacts on their profit-making abilities. This is compounded by the need of Canada Goose to maintain its image as a Canadian brand, which differentiates them from other garment manufacturers in the country (Reiss 2019).

The issue of union dues were apparent in the hesitance of workers to support the union drive. As some of the workers described, this hesitance originates from the low wages they receive, which, when impacted by monthly union dues, would further reduce their ability to socially reproduce themselves and their families. As reflected in Naidu's (2023) circuits of social reproduction, the wage is one mechanism in which workers are able to purchase the commodities needed for social reproduction (p. 101). When mechanisms such as social provisioning from the state are absent, workers are compelled to absorb the costs of social reproduction through market-based mechanisms such as the wage, or through transferring costs to unpaid reproductive labour in the home or in the community. The 'marketization' or 'commodification' of social reproductive processes are evident within the neoliberal era as social welfare has been retrenched in various parts of the world (Bakker 2003, pp. 69–70). Constituting the "(re-)privatization of social reproduction" thesis, the retrenchment of social welfare thus shifts the burden of social

reproduction back to the household, wherein women engaged in paid work suffer a "double burden" of paid employment and unpaid care labour (Bakker 2003, p. 68–69; Kunz 2010, p. 914). In the case of the immigrant women working at Canada Goose, this double burden of paid and unpaid labour was apparent in their concerns regarding the effects of the union dues on their wages. For example, one worker shared that she was concerned that the union dues would further reduce her earnings, which she needed to send remittances to her child, who was sick in the Philippines. Other participants cited the need to engage in paid work as immigrants to send remittances as breadwinners to their families in the Philippines. This concern over union dues and wages thus lays bare the ways in which the reproductive and productive conditions of Filipino immigrant women interlock and inform one another: the impact of union dues on pay was enough to generate hesitancy to join the union within workers who were already receiving low wages, many of whom need to send remittances in order to care for their families back home.

In terms of the successes of the union drive, there is some evidence pointing to the importance of considering social locations in union organizing and representation. Literature on gender, race, and unions have been critical towards the ability of unions to represent racialized and gendered immigrant workers, who have historically been excluded from union membership (Bentham 2016; Das Gupta 2016). Moreover, Verma et al. (2016) have shown that immigrants still face barriers to union membership and even those that belong to unions experience limited benefits (p. 693). In light of these challenges, Das Gupta (2006) calls for better representation for racialized and gendered workers within unions and the broader labour movement to address the needs of these workers more effectively. Within Canada Goose, union organizers and shop stewards have been shown to consider social locations, particularly race, ethnicity, gender, and

citizenship, in their engagements with workers. For example, one worker involved in recruiting workers stated that she was able to successfully recruit workers by relying on her connections with other workers from different ethnocultural backgrounds. After the formation of the union, social locations were also considered in the election of shop stewards, many of whom are women coming from the diverse array of ethnocultural backgrounds and communities currently working at Canada Goose. In considering the social location of workers belonging to their bargaining unit, workers have expressed that they are more comfortable engaging with their shop stewards. Thus, considering social locations such as gender, race, and citizenship matters in ensuring that workers are adequately organized and represented, especially for racialized and gendered immigrant workers, who may face barriers to union participation.

Analyzing the Effects of Unionization on the Precarious Employment of Workers at Canada Goose

Within Canada Goose, unionization was effective in addressing the concerns of workers related to contingency and control prior to forming the union. Much of the reasons why the workers at Canada Goose initiated a union drive in the first place can be attributed to issues of control and contingency tied to the imbalance in power between the management and the workers. In terms of control, participants cited having little to no avenues of addressing their concerns through methods of recourse at their workplace prior to the union being formed. The power relations between the workers and the management, along with the unfair ways in which workers were treated by management, negatively affected the ability of workers to address their concerns and shape their working conditions at Canada Goose. Central to this dynamic was the ability of the management to dictate the labour process undertaken by workers in Canada Goose, who felt as though the management pushed them to become as efficient as possible without

considering their individual circumstances. As some of the workers described, because hourly-paid sewing operators work in an assembly line, their individual efficiency may be affected by the quality of work of other workers in their line. In this case, the management acts as representatives of the profit maximizing goals of the owners at Canada Goose. Two participants empathized with the need of the company to make profits, but also recognized the need to treat workers with dignity and respect regardless of their efficiency. Although, one worker also recognized that without the workers, Canada Goose would not be able to earn any profits at all. Because the lack of control was central to driving the certification process, it is no surprise that workers found the most difference in this dimension of precarity because of the union. Because of the degree of regulatory protection that unions and collective agreements provide, workers are now able to shape their working conditions through mechanisms such as grievance procedures (Cranford and Vosko 2006, p. 51; Canada Goose Inc. and Workers United Canada Council 2022, p. 5). Therefore, similar to Hyman's (1971) analysis of trade unions, Canada Goose Union is able to address the conflict that exists over the control over the labour process, which is a central point of conflict and struggle between workers and capitalists (as represented by the managerial class) within the capitalist system.

The dimension of control also affected the contingency that workers held in terms of their job security. Because they had no voice in the workplace, workers felt as though they were easily replaceable on the grounds of their efficiency and performance, which was worsened by participants witnessing their co-workers being laid off easily without cause or reasonable notice. Although all of the participants interviewed held permanent, full-time positions at Canada Goose prior to the union being formed, the threat of dismissals remained because of the lack of control that workers held in their workplace, as shaped by the power imbalance that existed between

workers and the management. The ability to keep workers precarious in terms of contingency may be beneficial for firms such as Canada Goose, who need to ensure efficiency in terms of maximizing profits. By keeping workers in fear of losing their jobs, firms may be able to ensure that workers are producing as efficiently as possible to keep the threat of dismissal at bay. Precarious work may be beneficial to employers in this regard, whereby the threat of dismissal allows employers to ensure a level of labour productivity and intensity which maximizes their profits. Similar to the dimension of contingency, the union remedied the concerns that workers had about their job security by serving as a method of recourse in addressing issues of job security in the workplace, including those tied to labour productivity and intensity. As described by the participants, the union mediates between the interests of the workers and the management, and balances the power relations which shape the dimensions of contingency and control at Canada Goose.

Despite the differences made in contingency and control, the impact of the union was limited in terms of addressing the issue of pay and social wage or benefits received by workers at Canada Goose. Although the limited impact on wages was, in part, circumstantial (given that the province had coincidentally increased the minimum wage rate beyond the increases outlined in the workers' collective agreement), workers stated that they valued that the union was able to increase their wages, even when these increases were relatively small. In terms of benefits, there were little to no observed effects in this study in terms of healthcare coverage and insurance, which workers were already receiving prior to joining the union. The most visible impact in terms of non-wage benefits were in the enforcement of holiday or leave entitlements for workers, which participants placed value in because of their circumstances as immigrant workers. This area of benefits or social wages is an important concern for immigrant workers, whose social

reproductive obligations have become transnational and extend across borders and oceans to the families that they leave behind in their home countries (Asis, Huang, and Yeoh 2004; Parrenas 2001; Presto 2025). Prior to the union being formed, workers who needed to return to their home country to care for family members or address family emergencies were not able to undertake compassionate leave, and were compelled to quit and reapply once returning to Canada. Today, workers perceived that their leave entitlements are now effectively enforced through levels of seniority imposed by the union. In this regard, the union is able to address the unique conditions of reproduction experienced by workers through ensuring the ability to return to their home countries temporarily to undertake these labours of care.

Beyond the workplace, the union had some impacts in terms of empowering workers within the home or in their community. Two shop stewards shared feeling empowered by their involvement and leadership with the union. Kabeer (2021) understands empowerment as "inescapably bound up with the condition of disempowerment and refers to the processes by which those who have been denied the capacity to make choices gain this capacity" (p. 102). Contextualized within power structures which impede upon individual agency, empowerment is connected to the capacity of people to engage in collective action, such as those enabled through unions (Kabeer 2021, p. 103). Because their lives have been shaped by economic disempowerment through their precarious working conditions, workers thus become empowered through gaining the capacity to lead and educate themselves through collective actions through the union. Mechanisms of collective action through the union have also been beneficial for other workers, who now feel as though they have a voice in their workplace. Having racialized and gendered workers as union leaders not only results in positive feelings of empowerment for shop stewards themselves, but has been beneficial for workers who feel as though women are better

able to address their concerns because of their shared gender identities. Connecting Kabeer's (2021) definition of empowerment to Cranford and Vosko's (2006) dimensions of precarious work, the feelings of empowerment generated by union leadership and involvement thus has a mutually constitutive relationship with the control that racialized and gendered immigrant workers have over their working conditions through the collective mechanisms of the union.

Lastly, the union has been shown to positively impact workers' perceptions of security within the home. Two workers shared that they feel more secure in terms of their livelihoods because of the effects of the union on job security, with one worker stating that she can 'sleep better at night' [trans.] because of the union. Within the context of precarious employment in Canada Goose, the ability of the union to address the dimension of contingency thus aids in the social reproductive conditions of workers at Canada Goose. By enabling workers to have a sense of control and security over their working conditions, the union contributes to the reproductive bargain of their workers by improving the conditions in which they engage in wage labour, which remains as the central mechanism in which workers secure their means of living. Overall, the union was thus effective in addressing precarity through the dimensions of contingency and control, as issues that were central to the union certification drive. However, limits exist in improving the dimensions of pay and benefits received by the workers, where the most visible differences lied in the enforcement of leave entitlements for workers. These dimensions of precarious work were all influenced by the social locations of gender, race, and citizenship held by the immigrant women working at Canada Goose.

Limitations of the Study

Employing a case study approach to explore the interconnections between broad issues of precarious work, unionization, and migration leads to several limitations in terms of the

generalizability of this project. First, this project focuses solely on the history of Filipino migrant labour in Canada, thus excluding other immigrant populations with similar histories in Winnipeg's garment industry or otherwise. Second, this project is only concerned with the geographic and historical context of Winnipeg. Lastly, because the project engages with garment workers, some of the findings of this project may not be applicable to unions in other industries. This project was also limited in terms of time and reach. Further studies on this topic are encouraged to employ a larger sample size to account for more worker perspectives on unions.

Conclusion

Through using an intersectional approach grounded in feminist political economy (FPE), this project has shown that the precarious conditions of Filipino immigrant women working at Canada Goose are shaped by interlocking social locations of race, gender, and citizenship, impacting both their productive and their reproductive conditions. First, their experiences as immigrants and their journey from the Philippines to Canada were structured by gendered and racialized processes of labour recruitment and supply which socially reproduce a pool of flexible and mobile labour at a global scale, leading them to experience precarious working conditions upon arriving to Canada. As mothers, their social reproductive obligations impacted the work that they undertook as newcomers in Winnipeg, many of whom were de-skilled and took on precarious employment, including those within Canada Goose, as a means of survival. Social reproduction affected the labour market activity of the Filipino immigrant women in Canada Goose in three ways. First, their social reproductive obligations in the home have been shown to influence the types of work they undertake. Second, the need to send remittances, which contributes to the social reproduction of families that are left behind, impacts their likelihood of taking on 'survival jobs'. Lastly, the enforcement of leave is significant for immigrant workers who may need to return to their home countries to take on care-related obligations. As workers at Canada Goose, precarious work was defined by a lack of regulatory protection (i.e., union coverage), control, and contingency (i.e., job security), as shaped by an imbalance in power relations that existed between the workers and the management. These precarious working conditions compelled workers to begin a union certification drive at Canada Goose in 2019.

Various factors influenced the union certification process at Canada Goose. Provincial legislation, which instituted mandatory voting certification over card-check certification,

lengthened the union drive and contributed to its susceptibility to employer tactics at undermining the union. Employer tactics at Canada Goose mainly involved ad hoc strategies from management to instill fear within workers, including threats of dismissal and using anti-union rhetoric, which were effective because of the already precarious conditions of workers at Canada Goose as immigrant workers. The issue of union dues were particularly impactful in shaping workers' perceptions of and involvement with the union drive, particularly because of the function of the wage in maintaining the social reproduction of workers amidst the neoliberal era, where the public provisioning of social reproduction has been entrenched. However, the success of the union drive originated in the ability of the workers and organizers to consider the social locations of workers at Canada Goose, with ethnocultural and gender-based representation remaining as key factors in the union's ability to represent its diverse, immigrant workforce to this day.

The union was effective in addressing the dimensions of control and contingency associated with the precarious employment experienced by workers at Canada Goose prior to unionization. Control over the labour process, which is a key contention between workers and employers within the capitalist system, was one of the main concerns cited by workers when asked about the union certification drive. After the union was formed, this dimension of control was addressed by the union through providing the workers a method of recourse in terms of their concerns and issues in the workplace, particularly through introducing a grievance procedure through their collective agreement. Contingency or job security, which was also impacted by the power dynamics between the workers and the management, was also remedied by the union through ensuring that workers' job security was not tied to their efficiency in the production process or their relationship with the management. The effects of the union in terms of pay and

overall benefits were limited (in part, due to circumstances surrounding increases in the provincial minimum wage rate), but the impact on the enforcement of holiday or leave entitlements were visible to workers, who, as immigrants, valued the ability to return to their home country to undertake social reproductive obligations. Beyond the workplace, workers and shop stewards alike have experienced feelings of empowerment because of their association or involvement with the union, which allows them to engage in collective actions against the structures and systems which shape their precarious employment conditions. By shaping the conditions in which workers engage in wage labour, unions thus contribute to the reproductive bargain of Filipino immigrant women working at Canada Goose by ensuring a degree of control and contingency over their capacity to labour, and in doing so, impacting the precarious working and living conditions faced by immigrant women workers.

The overall consensus points to the positive effects of unions in shaping the productive and reproductive conditions of immigrant women workers at Canada Goose. In line with the action-oriented nature of community-based research (CBR), this study points to several recommendations tied to unions as a remedy towards precarious work. First, provincial governments must ensure that workers are able to form unions through instituting card-check certification over mandatory voting certification. Second, unions and the broader labour movement in Canada must endeavour to employ intersectional approaches in their labour mobilization tactics by considering the social locations of the workers they represent. In doing so, unions will be able to better address the unique conditions faced racialized and gendered workers. Third, because of the centrality of the wage and social wage in shaping the reproductive conditions of workers amidst the neoliberal era, unions must ensure that their functions as mediators in the workplace go hand-in-hand with their ability to negotiate increases in pay and

expansions of benefits for workers. In doing so, the ability of unions to contribute to the reproductive bargain of immigrant working women can be improved.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Information Sheet

INFO SHEET

Project Title: Unionization as a Community-based Intervention against the Precarious Employment of Filipino Immigrant Women in the Garment Industry: A case study of the Canada Goose Workers' Union in Winnipeg, MB

Activities to be completed by Research Participant and Timeframe:

- In-person or UM Zoom interview (1-1.5 hours), November 2024 – April 2025

Project Description

This research study is about the Canada Goose Workers' Union, focusing on the experiences of Filipino migrant women with the union. We are hoping to document the union effort of Canada Goose Workers' Union, and learn about the impact of the union on the working and living conditions of union members. This study is being conducted in collaboration with Workers United Canada Council, who is supporting the recruitment of participants for the project.

To be eligible for the study, participants must have **currently or formerly** been **involved** with Canada Goose Workers Union as a **union member** OR a **union leader/representative**:

- Those who are eligible to participate as former or current union members must also (a) **identify as a person of Filipino descent**, (b) **identify as a woman**, AND (c) **identify as a first-generation immigrant**.
- Those who are eligible to participate as former/current union representatives/leaders do not have to satisfy these requirements, but must have **familiarity with the unionization process** of Canada Goose Workers Union.

*Participants must also be comfortable with the interview being audio recorded for the purpose of accuracy

Interviews

Participants are expected to meet with the research lead (PI) for 1-1.5 hours in person or through UM Zoom. Interviews will be audio recorded. Participants may choose to conduct the interview in English or Tagalog.

After the interview, participants will receive an email of the transcript (a written document of the interview) and have the chance to review the transcript. When reviewing the transcript,

participants are asked to make note of any additional information, any changes in information, or any information they would like to remove from the transcript. Participants will then have 2 weeks to review the transcript. If they do not respond, it will be assumed that the transcript is accurate.

Study Risks
The risks associated to participating in this study are similar to the risks participants may face on a day-to-day basis as a union member or as a union representative from their association with their union, including tensions that may exist between their employer and their union. In the case that participants' responses are connected to them, there is some risk that responses may harm the professional connections that participants may have with fellow workers and union representatives.

Study Benefits
This research is expected to benefit racialized, gendered, and/or migrant workers seeking to form their own unions through showing an example of union strategies that work for women migrant workers. Participants may directly benefit from this research through the opportunity to evaluate their union. Participants may also benefit through contributing to knowledge that may be used to improve upon policies impacting the working conditions of precarious and/or migrant workers.

Compensation
Participants will be given an honorarium of $30 for their time participating in the study. Participants will receive their honorarium once a receipt of consent (a signed copy of the consent form) is provided.

Use and Storage Information
Interviews will be recorded for the purpose of accuracy in recording the participants' responses. In-person interviews will be recorded through a mobile phone, and interviews conducted through UM Zoom will be recorded through the Zoom cloud recording. The recording will begin after consent has been confirmed by the participant. The research lead (PI) and advisor will be able to access the audio recordings. Audio recordings will be destroyed once transcripts have been finalized.

Recordings made through a mobile phone will be transcribed through Trint, a UM-approved transcription software. Recordings made through Zoom cloud recording will be transcribed by a similar software that meets appropriate confidentiality and privacy protections. Interviews conducted in Tagalog will be manually transcribed by the PI.

Participant information will be stored on OneDrive, a secure storage platform approved by the University of Manitoba, and will be kept confidential by the PI and the advisor. Identity of participants will not be disclosed with Canada Goose Union or Workers United Canada Council. Only the PI and advisor will have access to directly identifiable data. All personal information that participants disclose during the interview will be removed and replaced with a code in the final transcript. A separate file will be kept storing participant information and the code associated with their information. Participants will not be named in any publications reporting

the findings of this study. Interview recordings will be destroyed once a final transcript is available. All confidential data will be destroyed no later than December 1, 2025

Dissemination
The results from this research will be shared through 3 publications: a report provided to the union for their own purposes; a Master's thesis for the completion of the student PI's degree requirements; and a short op-ed piece published through the Manitoba Research Alliance in alignment with the funding contract for this project. Research results may also be used for conference presentations and/or in academic and/or non-academic (i.e., professional, editorial) publications (e.g., journals, magazines).

Withdrawing from the research
Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants can withdraw from the study for any reason at any time during the interview, or until two weeks after the interview. To withdraw from the study during the interview, participants may inform the interviewer. Participants may also choose not to answer specific questions. Participants may choose to withdraw from the study until two weeks after the interview through contacting the PI through email (email) or phone (phone). Participants may also choose to omit responses from the research results after the interview through contacting the PI via email or phone. Participants will be able to keep their honorarium if they choose not to answer all of the questions in the interview, or if they choose to withdraw from the study.

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Angela Ciceron
Master's Student, Research Project Lead,
Department of Economics, University of Manitoba

Ian Hudson
Professor
Department of Economics, University of Manitoba

Appendix B

Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Unionization as a Community-based Intervention against the Precarious Employment of Filipino Immigrant Women in the Garment Industry: A case study of the Canada Goose Workers' Union in Winnipeg, MB

Researcher:
Angela Ciceron
Master's Student, Department of Economics
University of Manitoba

Ian Hudson
Professor
Department of Economics, University of Manitoba

*None of the researchers have any conflicts of interest in this study.
You are being invited to participate in a research study. This consent form, a copy of which you can download or print, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included her, feel free to ask any of the people named above. Please take the time to read this document and any accompanying information carefully. It is very important that you understand:

- what is being asked of you,
- what the risks and benefits of participation are, and
- how the information you provide will be used and stored.

Project Description

I am doing a thesis under the supervision of Dr. Ian Hudson from the University of Manitoba. This research study is about the Canada Goose Workers' Union, focusing on the experiences of Filipino migrant women with the union. We are hoping to document the union effort of Canada Goose Workers' Union, and learn about the impact of the union on the working and living conditions of union members. This study is being conducted in collaboration with Workers United Canada Council, who is supporting the recruitment of participants for the project.

To be eligible for the study, you must have **currently or formerly** been **involved** with Canada Goose Workers Union as a **union member** OR a **union leader/representative**:

- Those who are eligible to participate as former or current union members must also (a) **identify as a person of Filipino descent**, (b) **identify as a woman**, AND (c) **identify as a first-generation immigrant**.
- Those who are eligible to participate as former/current union representatives/leaders do not have to satisfy these requirements, but must have **familiarity with the unionization process** of Canada Goose Workers Union.

*Participants must also be comfortable with the interview being audio recorded for the purpose of accuracy

Interviews
If you decide to participate in the study, we will meet for 1-1.5 hours in person or through UM Zoom. Interviews will be audio recorded. Participants may choose to conduct the interview in English or Tagalog.

After the interview, you will receive an email of the transcript (a written document of the interview) and have the chance to review the transcript. When reviewing the transcript, please make note of any additional information, any changes in information, or any information you would like to remove from the transcript. You will then have 2 weeks to review the transcript. If you do not respond, I will assume that you are comfortable with the information included in the transcript.

Study Risks
The risks associated to participating in this study are similar to the risks you may face on a day-to-day basis as a union member or as a union representative from your association with your union, including tensions that may exist between your employer and your union. In the case that your responses are connected to you, there is some risk that responses may harm the professional connections that you may have with fellow workers and union representatives.

Study Benefits
This research is expected to benefit racialized, gendered, and/or migrant workers seeking to form their own unions through showing an example of union strategies that work for women migrant workers. You may directly benefit from this research through the opportunity to evaluate your union. You may also benefit through contributing to knowledge that may be used to improve upon policies impacting the working conditions of precarious and/or migrant workers.

Compensation
You will be given an honorarium of $30 for your time participating in the study. You will receive your honorarium once you provide a receipt of consent (a signed copy of this consent form).

Use and Storage Information
Your interview will be recorded to ensure that your responses are accurate. In-person interviews will be recorded through a mobile phone, and interviews conducted through UM Zoom will be recorded through Zoom cloud recording. The recording will begin after your consent has been confirmed. The research lead (PI) and advisor will be able to access the audio recordings. Audio recordings will be destroyed once transcripts have been finalized.

Recordings made through a mobile phone will be transcribed through Trint, a UM-approved transcription software. Recordings made through Zoom cloud recording will be transcribed by a similar software that meets appropriate confidentiality and privacy protections. Interviews conducted in Tagalog will be manually transcribed by the PI.

Your information will be stored on OneDrive, a secure storage platform approved by the University of Manitoba. We will keep your information confidential. Your identity will not be disclosed with Canada Goose Union or Workers United Canada Council. Only the PI and advisor will have access to directly identifiable data. All personal information that you disclose with us during the interview will be removed and replaced with a code in the final transcript. A separate file will be kept storing your information and the code associated with your information. You will not be named in any publications reporting the findings of this study. The recording of your interview will be destroyed once a final transcript is available. All confidential data will be destroyed no later than December 1, 2025.

Dissemination
The results from this research will be shared through 3 publications: a report provided to the union for their own purposes; a Master's thesis for the completion of the student PI's degree requirements; and a short op-ed piece published through the Manitoba Research Alliance in alignment with the funding contract for this project. Research results may also be used for conference presentations and/or in academic and/or non-academic (i.e., professional, editorial) publications (e.g., journals, magazines).

Withdrawing from the research
Your participation in this study is voluntary. This means that you can withdraw from the study for any reason at any time during the interview, or until two weeks after the interview. To withdraw from the study during the interview, you may inform the interviewer. You may also choose not to answer specific questions. You may choose to withdraw from the study until two weeks after the interview through contacting the PI through email (email) or phone (phone). You may also choose to omit responses from the research results after the interview through contacting the PI via email or phone. You will be able to keep your honorarium if you choose not to answer all of the questions in the interview, or if you choose to withdraw from the study.

Questions or Concerns
Designated University of Manitoba personnel may check that this study is being done safely and properly. To do this, they may visit the study site or review the research records. We will tell you if someone outside the research team will be there while you are participating. If this makes you uncomfortable, please tell a member of the research team, who will ask the personnel to return at another time.

This study has been reviewed and approved by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba. However, this does not mean that participation is risk-free. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Office of Human Research Ethics at (email) or (phone).

If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about this study, you may contact any members of the research team listed on the first page or the Office of Human Research Ethics.

Consent

By signing this document, I agree that:

- I have read the above information or had it read to me.
- I have had the opportunity to ask and have answered all of my questions.
- I understand what is being asked of me.
- I will be taking part in a research study.
- I may freely stop or leave the research study activities at any time.
- My information may be shared outside the University of Manitoba.
- I do not waive my legal rights by participating in the study.

Notice Regarding Collection, Use, and Disclosure of Personal Information

Your personal information is being collected under the authority of The University of Manitoba Act. The University of Manitoba is committed to preserving your right to privacy. The information you provide will be used by the University to support our research. Your personal information will not be used or disclosed for other purposes, unless permitted by The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or The Personal Health Information Act. If you have any questions about the collection of personal information: Ph: (phone) or Email: (email).

A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Thank you for participating in this project. Your cooperation and insights are very valuable and are greatly appreciated!

I affirm that I am aware that an audio recording of my interview will be made. Yes ☐

I acknowledge that my comments may be quoted as a current/former member or representative of Canada Goose Workers' Union.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I, _____ (print name), currently/formerly a _____ (affiliation with union) with Canada Goose Union agree to participate in this study.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant. Date

Summary of Results

I would like to receive a summary of the results from this project (expected to be available by June 1, 2025). If yes, please provide your email address or mailing address below.

Yes ☐ Contact information: _____

No ☐

Appendix C

Interview Questions

Title of Project: Unionization as a Community-based Intervention against the Precarious Employment of Filipino Immigrant Women in the Garment Industry: A case study of the Canada Goose Workers' Union in Winnipeg, MB

Name of Researcher:

- Angela Ciceron, Master's student, Department of Economics, University of Manitoba

[Prior to interview beginning, interviewer will explain the project, review the consent form and make sure the participant is: comfortable with the process, aware of their right to withdraw at any time during the interview, and can withdraw until two weeks after the interview.]

Interview Questions

SET A: For former/current union leaders/representatives

1. Please affirm that you are aware that this interview will be recorded to aid with accuracy and transcription.

   Pakiapirma po na alam ninyo na rinerecord po itong interview na ito upang tumpak ang transcript.

2. What is/was the nature of your affiliation with Canada Goose? How long have you/were you affiliated with Canada Goose?

   Paano po kayo nabilang/nabibilang sa Canada Goose? Gaano katagal po kayo nagrabaho o naapilya sa Canada Goose?

3. What are your impressions of the conditions at Canada Goose before the union was formed?

   Ano po ang mga impresyon niyo sa mga kondisyon sa Canada Goose bago nabuo ang union?

4. Do you think the union certification process was a success? Why or why not?

Sa inyong palagay, matagumpay po ba ang union certification process ng Canada Goose? Bakit o bakit hindi?

5. Are you aware of any obstacles or challenges in the certification process that had to be overcome?

   May kamalayan po ba kayo sa mga hamon na hinarap ng union sa kanilang proseso ng pagorganisa at sa pag-certify?

6. Did you receive any support from the community, from labour organizations in Winnipeg or in Canada more broadly? In your perspective, did having support affect the likelihood of success in terms of the certification process?

   Nakatanggap ba kayo ng suporta galing sa inyong komunidad, sa mga organisasyong pag-manggagawa sa Winnipeg o sa Canada? Sa inyong palagay, naapektuhan ba nito ang posibilidad na matagumpay ang certification process?

7. To your knowledge, has there been any differences in pay or wages because of the union?

   Sa inyong palagay, nagkaroon ba ng pagkakaiba sa sahod o suweldo dahil sa union?

8. Do you think that unionization has made a difference in terms of the benefits that employees receive?

   Naapektuhan ba ng union ang mga benepisyo na natatanggap ng mga manggagawa sa Canada Goose, katulad ng insurance o pensyon?

9. Has the union made a difference in terms of the job security of employees? / *Naapektuhan ba ng union ang seguridad ng mga empleyado sa trabaho nila?*

10. In your perspective, has the union affected the employees' ability to influence or change the conditions within the workplace?

    Sa inyong palagay, naapektuhan ba ng union ang abilidad ng mga empleyado na impluwensyahan o baguhin ang mga kondisyon nila sa trabaho?

11. Has the union made a difference in your life outside of the workplace? For example, at home or in the community?

    Nagkaroon na ba ng epekto ang union sa buhay mo sa labas ng trabaho? Halimbawa, sa bahay o sa komunidad?

12. This union is predominantly made up of female workers. Do you think that the dominance of female workers made a difference in the certification process, or in terms of the way the union was formed?

Mga babae ang nangingibabaw sa mga miyembro ng union. Sa iyong pananaw, nagkaroon ba ito ng epekto sa certification process ng union, o sa pagorganisa ng union?

13. Overall, do you think that the union has been good for workers within Canada Goose? Why or why not?
Sa pangkalahatan, sa tingin mo ba maganda ang naidulot o naidudulot ng union para sa mga manggagawa ng Canada Goose? Bakit o bakit hindi?

14. In your perspective, are there any improvements that could be made to the union? If so, can you identify these improvements?

Sa iyong pananaw, mayroon bang mga bagay na pwedeng paunlarin pa sa loob ng union? Kung mayroon, ano ang mga bagay na ito?

15. Do you have any other information that you'd like to share about the impact of the union within Canada Goose? / *Mayroon ka pa bang impormasyon na gusto mong ibahagi tungkol sa epekto ng union sa Canada Goose?*

SET B: For former/current union members

1. Please affirm that you are aware that this interview will be recorded to aid with accuracy and transcription.

Pakiapirma po na alam ninyo na rinerecord po itong interview na ito upang tumpak ang transcript.

2. When did you move to Canada? Can you tell me about your employment experiences before you migrated, and after you migrated to Canada?* ask immigrant pathway*

Kailan ka lumipat sa Canada? Pwede mo bang ipabahagi ang iyong mga karanasan sa trabaho bago ka lumipat, at pagkatapos mo lumipat sa Canada?

3. What is/was the nature of your affiliation with Canada Goose? How long have you/were you affiliated with Canada Goose? How did you start working at CG?

Paano po kayo nabilang/nabibiland sa Canada Goose? Gaano katagal na po kayo nagtatrabaho o naapilya sa Canada Goose?

4. Have you been involved in any union activities? If so, which activities?

Nakibahagi ka na ba sa mga aktibidad ng iyong union? Kung oo, ano ang mga aktibidad na ito?

5. What are your impressions of the conditions at Canada Goose before the union was formed?

Ano po ang mga impresyon niyo sa mga kondisyon sa Canada Goose bago nabuo ang union?

6. Do you think the union certification process was a success? Why or why not?

   Sa inyong palagay, matagumpay po ba ang union certification process ng Canada Goose? Bakit o bakit hindi?

7. Are you aware of any obstacles or challenges in the certification process that had to be overcome?

   May kamalayan po ba kayo sa mga hamon na hinarap ng union sa kanilang proseso ng pagorganisa at sa pag-certify?

8. Did you receive any support from the community, from labour organizations in Winnipeg or in Canada more broadly? In your perspective, did having support affect the likelihood of success in terms of the certification process?

   Nakatanggap ba kayo ng suporta galing sa inyong komunidad, sa mga organisasyong pag-manggagawa sa Winnipeg o sa Canada? Sa inyong palagay, naapektuhan ba nito ang posibilidad na matagumpay ang certification process?

9. To your knowledge, has there been any differences in pay or wages because of the union?

   Sa inyong palagay, nagkaroon ba ng pagkakaiba sa sahod o suweldo dahil sa union?

10. Do you think that unionization has made a difference in terms of the benefits that employees receive?

    Naapektuhan ba ng union ang mga benepisyo na natatanggap ng mga manggagawa sa Canada Goose, katulad ng insurance o pensyon?

11. Has the union made a difference in terms of the job security of employees?

    Naapektuhan ba ng union ang seguridad ng mga empleyado sa trabaho nila?

12. In your perspective, has the union affected the employees' ability to influence or change the conditions within the workplace?

    Sa inyong palagay, naapektuhan ba ng union ang abilidad ng mga empleyado na impluwensyahan o baguhin ang mga kondisyon nila sa trabaho?

13. Has the union made a difference in your life outside of the workplace? For example, at home or in the community?

Nagkaroon na ba ng epekto ang union sa buhay mo sa labas ng trabaho? Halimbawa, sa bahay o sa komunidad?

14. This union is predominantly made up of female workers. Do you think that the dominance of female workers made a difference in the certification process, or in terms of the way the union was formed?

    Mga babae ang nangingibabaw sa mga miyembro ng union. Sa iyong pananaw, nagkaroon ba ito ng epekto sa certification process ng union, o sa pagorganisa ng union?

15. Overall, do you think that the union has been good for workers within Canada Goose? Why or why not?

    Sa pangkalahatan, sa tingin mo ba maganda ang naidulot o naidudulot ng union para sa mga manggagawa ng Canada Goose? Bakit o bakit hindi?

16. In your perspective, are there any improvements that could be made to the union? If so, can you identify these improvements?

    Sa iyong pananaw, mayroon bang mga bagay na pwedeng paunlarin pa sa loob ng union? Kung mayroon, ano ang mga bagay na ito?

17. Do you have any other information that you'd like to share about the impact of the union within Canada Goose?

    Mayroon ka pa bang impormasyon na gusto mong ibahagi tungkol sa epekto ng union sa Canada Goose?